

WARREN
MAGAZINE



EERIE
#67

THIS ISSUE: **MERLIN, THE HACKER, PAPA VODOO & HUNTER II!**

EERIE

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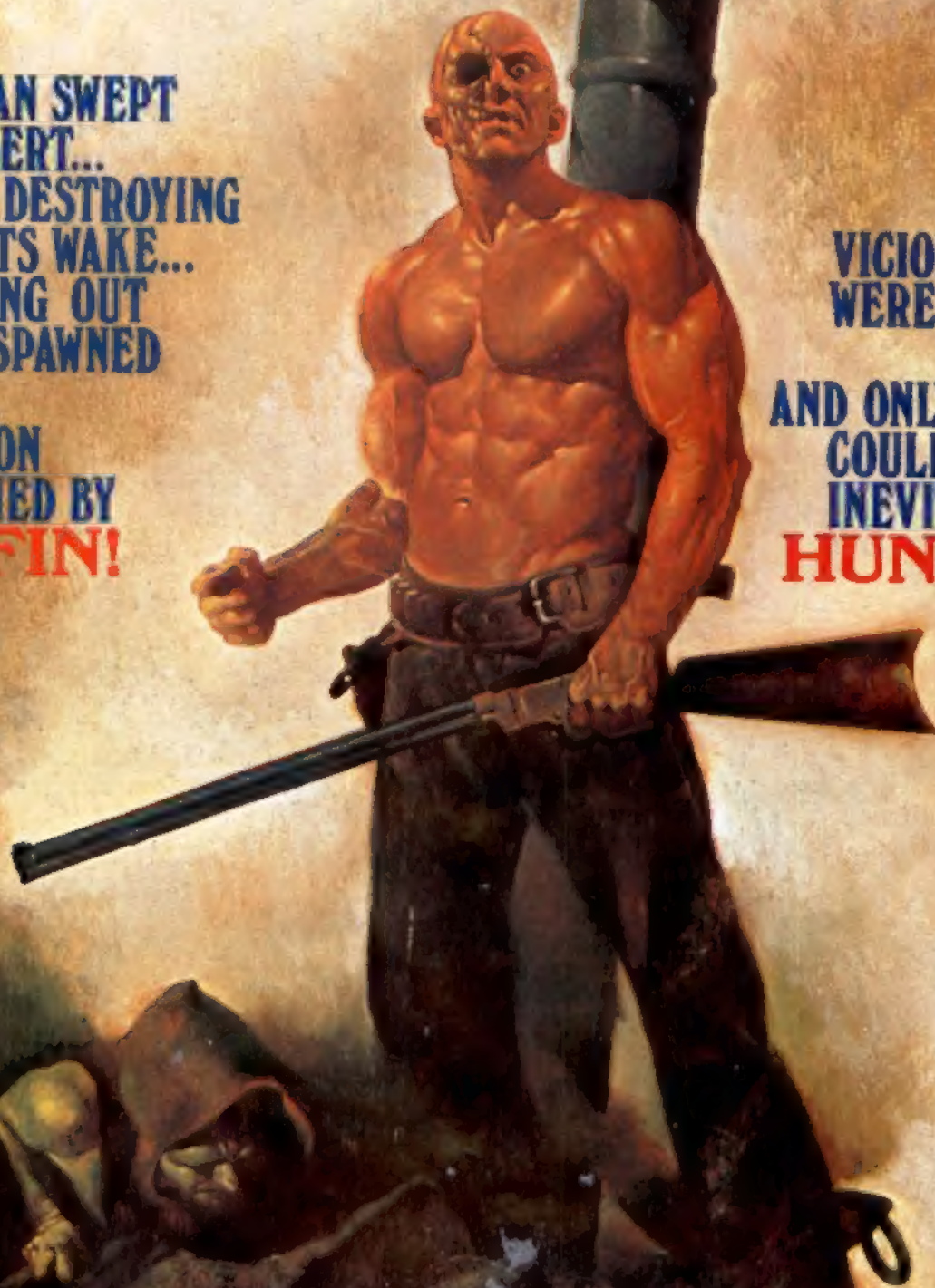
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UK 30p

AUG. 1975

**A CARAVAN SWEEP
THE DESERT...
KILLING, DESTROYING
ALL IN ITS WAKE...
SEARCHING OUT
A HELL-SPAWNED
DEMON...
...A DEMON
UNLEASHED BY
COFFIN!**

**THE EARTH
WAS DYING.
VICIOUS GOBLINS
WERE ENSLAVING
HUMANITY!
AND ONLY A LEGEND
COULD HALT THE
INEVITABLE END!
HUNTER II**



GREETINGS, KIDDIES.
YOUR OLD **COUSIN EERIE'S**
BEEN WORKING THE GRAVE-
YARD SHIFT TO BRING YOU
SOME VERY SPECIAL
HORROR.

I'VE EXHUMED **COFFIN...**
AND A CARNIVAL OF DEATH.
I'VE HELPED **HACKER** PUT
A LOT OF PEOPLE SIX FEET
UNDER.

I'VE EXCAVATED A HERO'S
HELMET... AND UNEARTHED
A **HERO.** I'VE HELPED A
MASTER SORCERER BURY A
SWORD IN A **STONE...** AND
READIED THE EARTH FOR A
KING.

AND IN MY SPARE TIME I'VE
HELPED **PAPA VOODOO**
TUNNEL FOR **GOLD.**

SO GRAB YOUR
SHOVELS, KIDDIES,
AND **DIG IN!**





OUR COVER

Coffin: a hero more dead than alive. Coffin: who looks for death. Brings death to others, yet must earn the right to die himself. A grim portrait by master-artist, Sanjulian!

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EERIE®

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ISSUE NO. 67
AUGUST 1975

4 DEAR COUSIN EERIE "I'm a Sword and Sorcery fanatic," writes Rex Munsee. "And in 'El Cid and the Troll' I missed the elements I relish most. Where were the monsters? Warriors? Sword fights? A senile old man posing as a troll just doesn't make it!"

6 COMICS... THE ART "You can save a bad story with great art, but bad art will ruin a great story every time." This axiom is familiar to a lot of comic fans. But what makes great art? Talent. Ego. Persistence. Training. Time. And a lot of very hard work.

7 COFFIN: DEATH'S COLORS The Indians tortured Coffin. He had been half eaten by ants when he escaped. But he was denied mortality. When he spotted the caravan in the desert, he knew instinctively that it brought evil. And promise of death!

17 HUNTER II: PHOENIX FIRE Atomic war. Destroyed civilization. Mutant goblins have inherited the earth. Humanity fights and inevitably loses to the fangs and claws of the mutants. Then someone unearths a fighter's helmet. And discovers a hero!

28 HACKER'S LAST STAND Severed heads rolled in London's alleyways. Appeared gift-wrapped at Police Headquarters. The mad Hacker struck again and again. Now Inspector Smythe was marked for destruction. Is this the end of Smythe or the Hacker?

39 CRACKERMEYER: GOLD Apaches brutally razed the settlement. A black woman and her children were taken captive. Gold's family. Then a legend was born. The Black Shadow of Death stalked the Apaches. Burning. Scalping. Slaying. Seeking revenge!

52 MERLIN: THE KINGMAKER Old Englonde. Ravaged by Roman invaders. Ruined by civil war. Ripe for a hero-king. But real kings are not born, they are made. By skill, cunning and blackest sorcery. Merlin was a sorcerer... and a maker of Kings.



"El Cid...sham Sword and Sorcery!"

The Jackass series came to an end in EERIE #65, with the last of four very powerful episodes. It was fantastic from beginning to end.

The portrayals of the main characters, Garson and Bishop, were realistic, powerful and extremely emotional. Each story gave new insight into their personalities, depicting two complex, yet very human comic book heroes.

Jose Ortiz maintained a high standard of excellence in his art throughout the series' run. And writer Bruce Bezaire performed admirably as well. Together they gave us one of the finest series to appear in EERIE yet.

ROB LESKOT
Detroit, Mich.

Apocalypse: Death" was by far the best story in EERIE #65. Budd Lewis is a writer unsurpassed in the comics media. And Jose Ortiz has fit snugly into the throne left long-vacated by Neal Adams.

The only story I didn't like this issue was *The Hacker*. It had a minimal plot and very little potential for anything other than mediocrity. In other words, it was a dud. And that's a shame since Alex Toth's art deserved a much better story.

TOM FETTERS
Norristown, Penn.

I get a lot of enjoyment out of *Hunter*. That was the first series that really reached out and grabbed hold of my imagination. In truth, I couldn't wait to get my paws on the next issue to find out what happened.

Schreck affected me the same way.

If you could create a series to match those two, I'd be content.

STEVEN L. THOMPSON
Urbana, Ohio

Check out *HUNTER II*, Steve. It may be just what you're looking for. But if it's not, stick around for a special encore presentation of the original *HUNTER-SCHRECK* stories, scheduled in their entirety for our summer giant, EERIE #69. It'll be a true collector's dream...with some of that very special Warren color

I have never been a fan of Alex Toth. I've always found his figures stiff and cartoonish. But his art on *The Hacker* was very much to my liking. If he continues to turn in art like this, and last issue's "Daddy and the Pie," he could actually become one of my favorite illustrators.

JOYCE MITCHELL
Old Town, Maine

"El Cid and the Troll" left me with mixed feelings. I'm a sword and sorcery fanatic. I love the stuff. But this tale didn't have any of the elements I relish most in sword and sorcery tales. Where were the monsters? Savages? Warriors? Deadly sword fights? An old man posing as a troll just doesn't make it. Give us something a little more terrifying next time!

REX MUNSEE
Wattsburg, Penn.

EERIE #65 was practically a Budd Lewis tour de force.

The Spook and Cracker-meyer tale, "A Coming Storm," had the perception, power and lyric quality that is Lewis at his best.

"El Cid and the Troll," though not as powerful, was a well-crafted ode based on a perceptive premise.

Of the three Lewis stories this issue "Apocalypse: Death," alone failed to satisfy.

Bruce Bezaire is no literary slouch either, as his masterful Jackass series has shown. However, the well-plotted resolution to that series suffered from an over-hurried pace.

Pacing was the main problem with Steve Skeates' *Hacker* tale, as well. This one story should have been spread out over several issues. Instead, it was presented with a complex, difficult to follow plot.

Artwise, the clear standout of EERIE #65 was Gonzalo Mayo's masterful work on *El Cid*. I'm certainly looking forward to that series' next issue.

By the way, I hope you're planning on bringing back the interior color. It added so much to a Rich Corben or an Esteban Maroto feature. It was the one attraction I looked forward to most in the Warren magazines.

ED O'REILLY
Ada, Ohio

Put on your shades, Ed. Those bright, bright color sections will be appearing in the Warren magazines all summer long...beginning with our very next issue!

I am an Exterminator addict.

Bring on Exterminator Three. Or Four. I'll take as many as you give.

And please...make a poster of EERIE #64's Exterminator cover painting. It would be an instant success...because I'd buy a hundred of them.

Let me reiterate: bring back Exterminator. Any Exterminator.

DOHN DETRICH
Orange, Calif.

It may be awhile before an Exterminator pops up in the pages of EERIE, Dohn. Then again it COULD be next issue. There seem to be so many Exterminators running around, one never knows where they'll appear next. Maybe in a strip of their own...or maybe fighting side-by-side with another EERIE character...like, say...*HUNTER II*.

"Apocalypse: Death" by Jose Ortiz and Budd Lewis was my favorite tale in EERIE #65. I have enjoyed the *Apocalypse* series since it began with the thought-provoking story, "War!" Each segment, "Plague," "Famine," was a masterpiece. It's one series I am going to miss.

"El Cid and the Troll" was another fine example of teamwork with Lewis' excellent story and Gonzalo Mayo's superb art. This one saga has whet my appetite, as you knew it would, for the special *El Cid* issue. The only drawback is that I'll have to wait one full month until it goes on sale.

CHRIS PADOVANO
Sayreville, N.J.

I have been noticing a trend of late, within comic magazines. All comic magazines. There seems to be fewer and fewer monsters, vampires and the like, and much more emphasis on true-to-life horrors.

Far from a disturbing trend, I feel it is one sorely needed within a sagging industry, to help it "grow up." Surprisingly, this comics-wide "fad" seems to have been started by the tiny Warren magazines. As they have become more mature, so have the comics of the larger publishing houses.

It seems that again, James Warren is the leader...the trendsetter in his field. He is not only keeping up with the times, he is stepping ahead of them, blending reality and fantasy...and doing it exceptionally.

It only shows that Warren has not lost his golden touch.

RICHARD LAWRENCE
Valley Stream, N.Y.

You guys blew it! Ken Kelly obviously deserved the Special Warren Award he received for his excellent covers. But why, in the Warren Award presentation was Kelly credited with painting the hauntingly beautiful Jackass cover of EERIE #63? That was a Sanjulian masterpiece, fellas!

MIKE WOLFF
Chicago, Ill.

How right you are, Mike. That was the kind of error that causes editors to consider suicide and publishers to contemplate homicide.

The painting that was supposed to have appeared in the article was Ken's superb BACK cover of EERIE #63, featuring the Exterminator robot.



"Where the monsters?"

After more than ten years of publishing comics it can at last be said that **Jim Warren** has come up with a magazine geared for the masses. Who would ever have thought that a publication like **EERIE**, a horror magazine, could offer so much... so differently, within its original horror format?

CREEPY was unique, because it was the first black and white magazine to offer illustrated horror stories. **EERIE**, however, was simply a carbon-copy of this successful format... a Johnny-come-lately that was not needed to fill any publishing gap... as **CREEPY** had been intended. Consequently, **EERIE**'s stories seemed redundant... always like we had read them in **CREEPY** beforehand.

We had ten full years of independent short stories. Of vampires, werewolves and ghouls. Of nothing but short-short horror tales... in both **CREEPY** and **EERIE**. And every story was a repetition of a theme that had been done a hundred times... in the same magazines.

I'm sorry to say it, but it looked as though both magazines were dying... strangling each other... competing with each other on the newsstand.

Publisher Warren must have seen this... and possibly become even a little frightened by it. Something must have clicked somewhere, for he ordered a whole new face lift for **EERIE**. And the result is the **fresh**est, most **exciting** publication in comics today.

The new **EERIE** is no longer a second-banana to its companion **CREEPY**. Instead, it has surpassed the original in originality. And in doing so, it has cast a new spotlight on itself and **CREEPY**.

The new **EERIE** series are so different... so varied that the tastes of almost no comic book reader are overlooked. For the sockem-rockem adventure freaks there has been **Spook**, **The Butcher** and **Jackass**. For monster buffs, **Child**, **Unholy Creation** and **The Mummy**. In science fiction there's been **Manhunters**, **Hunter**, **Daddy** and **The Pie**. For older, more intelligent readers you've had **Apocalypse** and **Exterminator One**. And for kids, there's been **The Hacker** and **Unholy Creation**. Something for everyone, every issue. And surprisingly, each series presented, no matter how different or off-beat, has conformed to the horror theme of **EERIE** magazine without using the short-short horror premise.

The alternating series... the concluding series... the introduction of new characters... the deaths of others, have all added freshness and excitement to the magazine that can be found in no other comic publication today. It has also, I suspect, given readers that shot-in-the-arm incentive to pick up each succeeding issue.

EERIE's new look has given a freshness to **CREEPY**, also. It has made the original magazine of illustrated horror, the only magazine to carry the short horror story we have loved for so long.

I'd just like to thank you, **Mr. Warren**, for being one smart publisher. The only one with enough intelligence to give the public what its really wanted all along.

JOHN IMHOFF
Bend, Ore.

EERIE #65 was just average, as far as **EERIE**'s go. But because it's the best magazine published today, it still outclassed every other color and black and white comic on the newsstand.

"Endstorm" was an exciting conclusion to the **Jackass** series. **Bruce Bezaire** and **Jose Ortiz** should be congratulated. I am sad to see this series end.

"The Hacker Is Back" was nothing special. Chilling in parts, perhaps. **Alex Toth**'s art was a little too unrealistic. I much prefer his stylized rendering on **EERIE** #64's "Daddy and the Pie." Now that is a fine series! I'm very much looking forward to more of it... and soon!

Spook and **Crackermeyer's** "A Killing Rain" was interesting, exciting and fast paced. It proved that violence cannot be stopped by a dose of greater violence... something politicians should have learned long ago.

I was sad to see **Spook** die... again! But glad in a way, too. For now I know we'll be treated to another new **EERIE** series.

You published the **El Cid** story as a teaser, didn't you? Just a taste of fine things to come. **Gonzalo Mayo's** art on the story was beautifully detailed. And **Budd Lewis** came up with another fine yarn. If your remaining **El Cid** tales are as good as this one, **EERIE** #66, the all **El Cid** issue promises to be a sure-fire winner.

RUSSELL KALTSCHMIDT
Centereach, N.Y.

By now you've seen the all **El Cid** issue, **Russell**. Hope it lived up to your expectations.



Readers welcomed back **Alex Toth**! Many liked **The Hacker** but felt that it lacked the exciting detail present in **Toth's** much-praised "Daddy and the Pie" from **EERIE** #65.

EERIE #65 was a letdown. The only redeeming qualities were the great cover by **Ken Kelly**, the **Jackass** story and **Gonzalo Mayo's** art on **El Cid**.

I wanted **The Hacker** back, but I didn't want a different artist. Although **Alex Toth** is among the best, **Tom Sutton** is one of my personal favorites. He should have been allowed to continue the series where he left off. His art was out of sight.

I'm glad to see the last of **Spook**. The storyline was becoming more and more boring. I think that was most evident this issue. I felt no loss whatsoever at the zombie giant's death.

El Cid seems to be a try at yet another **Dax**-like character, and I don't like it! **Dax** had no personality. No motivation. And **El Cid** seems to share those qualities.

The "Night of the Jackass" is over, sad to say. It ranked with **Hunter** and **Child** as one of the best series ever.

EERIE #65 also brought us the last of **The Apocalypse**. Thank heavens that's over. I'll miss **Jackass**, but I won't miss **Apocalypse** at all!

ALAN NORDMARK
Dalton, Penn.

Although I liked the ending of the **Jackass** series in **EERIE** #65, I regretted that it had to end at all.

As series go, it was one of my all time favorites.

More and more series seem to be coming to an end. Why? Are you making room for new ones? Or are you reverting to the old **EERIE** format of short terror tales?

JOE MOE
Kailua, Hawaii

We have lots more series scheduled, **Joe**. But in order to show off the new, we must wind up the old. This issue, **HUNTER II**, **MERLIN** and **PAPA VOODOO** debut, while the **HACKER** concludes its three-episode run. Next issue, one of many special treats is the introduction of **GOD-EYE**, possibly the most interesting character we've yet presented.

Spook was my favorite of all the **EERIE** series. Did you really kill him?

LANCE NICHOLS
New Port Richey, Fla.

As dead as a **Spook** can die, **Lance**.

HELP! I'M BEING PUSHED OUT OF MY OWN MAGAZINE!

Poor Cousin **Eerie's** been **Coffin** all day. Either he has a cold or he's becoming a nervous **Schreck**. Don't let the **Child** be **Spooked** by these series. Write & tell him you care!

DEAR COUSIN **EERIE**
c/o Warren Publishing Co.
145 East 32nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10016



everything you always wanted to know...about the comics!

the art

OR ALL YOU NEED IS TEMPERAMENT, TALENT, EGO AND LOTS OF PATIENCE!

Writers, artists, letterers, editors. All have important jobs necessary for the production of a comic book. But the most hailed member of this four-man team is the **artist**. His work dominates each comic book page. And his ability to draw, his artistic style, his storytelling capa-

bilities, make a story successful... or doom it to oblivion.

In this third article in our series of what goes into making the comics, we'll discuss the **artist**. While every artist has his own method of working, the following are basics, more or less common to all artists illustrating comic books.

WHO IS THE ARTIST, WHAT DOES HE DO?

The first knock in every comic book artists' career comes the day someone asks him what he does for a living. The standard, "I draw comic books" reply is often greeted by non-comic followers with gasps and shocked expressions like, "I always thought a **machine** did that!" But as the comic book aficionado knows, all of those pretty pictures in each story are illustrated by the hands of an artist... who usually feels more like a machine than a man.

It is the comic artist's near-impossible task to take a story prepared by a writer, and convert the author's thoughts into a series of consecutive pictures that will become the comic book story.

THE FINAL PHASE, INKING

The comic book page is finished only after the pencilled pages are "**inked**" with **black india ink**. This is the final step, and one of the most important.

The art is inked with **pen, brush, or whatever medium** the artist is most comfortable in using. The pencilled drawings are gone over completely with ink, and when the artist is through, he erases all of the pencil lines, takes his finished work to the editor, and exchanges it for a healthy sum of money.

THE EQUIPMENT

Besides obvious illustrative talent, the comic book artist must have good, professional equipment. Some of the basic tools of the trade are:

Pencils: Either blue or black, select the ones you are most comfortable with.

Bristol board: Comes with a rough "kid" or smooth "plate" surface. The most common for comics is **2-ply kid finished board**.

India ink: Used by all artists for all comic book inking.

Pens: A wide variety are used, from **crow quill** to **rapidograph**. Again, select the ones you are most comfortable in using.

Brushes: The smaller brushes are best. Sizes **00** to **4** tend to be the range used, with sizes **1** and **2** the most popular.

Opaque white: For corrections.

THE FIRST STEP: LAYOUT/BREAKDOWN

When a comic book artist is assigned a story to illustrate, he is given a comic **script**. He reads the script, becomes thoroughly familiar with the characters, the storyline, plots and sub-plots. He then sits down, usually with nothing more than a **pencil** and a few sheets of standard **typewriter paper**, and sketches each page of the script into a series of rough drawings.

This is called breaking down the script and laying it out. In this stage, the artist is very conscious of the flow of the story, making sure that the pictures in each panel logically precede the next, for continuity and easy reading.

PENCILLING THE PAGE

After the script has been broken down and the rough layouts completed, the artist begins work on each individual comic page.

Panel borders are drawn, and the illustrations that were broken down on typing paper are sketched with blue or black pencil onto large sheets of art paper called **bristol board**. This original art is drawn anywhere from one-and-a-half to two times the actual size of the printed comic book page, to allow the artist a larger drawing area. When printed, this page is photographed and reduced in size, eliminating imperfections within the art.

Pencilling can take anywhere from several hours to several days, depending on the artist, his working habits and the quality of his work. But when the page is completed, it is passed on to a letterer who adds the captions and balloons.

IT SOUNDS GOOD, BUT...

The artists' job, while grossly simplified here, is actually the most difficult job in comics. It requires talent, skill and patience far exceeding that of artists in any other field. The average comic book artist practices his craft for years before he lands his first professional assignment. He is continually working at his drawing abilities, perfecting his style, his techniques, his knowledge of the world around him.

Art, while one of the most rewarding jobs in comics publishing, can also be one of the most frustrating. The average artist finds himself continually laboring long hours over individual panels, striving for self-improvement, striving to be as good, if not better than his peers, always reaching for that elusive and fickle goal: **perfection**.



The comic book page in its various stages of completion. Left, rough layout sketches pencilled on typing paper. Center, a pencilled comic book page, minus lettering. Right, inked and lettered, the finished page is ready for press.

THE DESERT. IT HAD BEGUN THERE. DAYS... WEEKS... **MONTHS** AGO! HE COULDN'T EVEN REMEMBER. HE REMEMBERED ONLY THE **PAIN**. THE INDIANS... STAKING HIM TO AN ANT HILL IN THE TORRID HELL OF THE DESERT SUN. THE MEDICINE MAN... **CURSING** HIM... WORKING INDIAN **MAGIC**... CONDEMNING HIM TO ETERNAL LIFE!

AND THE **ANTS**. THE TERRIBLE **ANTS**. CREEPING. CRAWLING. **EATING** HIM. FIRST AN **EYE**. THEN A **NOSTRIL**... AND HALF OF HIS **FACE**. THE SUN, **TOO**. THE DAMNING DESERT **SUN**. BRINGING **THIRST**... **HUNGER**... **MISERY**. BUT **NEVER** BRINGING **DEATH**.

MEMORIES. THE DESERT WAS FILLED WITH THEM. IT WAS FILLED WITH MANY STRANGE THINGS. INDIANS WITH MAGICAL **CURSES**. DEAD MEN WHO COULD **NOT** DIE. AND A **CARAVAN**... A **FAR** **EASTERN** CARAVAN, FAR TOO **WEST** OF THE DESERT IT **SHOULD** HAVE BEEN IN!



HE **SENSED** THEM, LONG BEFORE THE SILENT DESERT SHIPS STOLE BLACKLY INTO HIS VISION. HE **SMELLED**, **TASTED**, **FELT** THEM.

COFFIN DEATH'S DARK COLORS



THE MYSTICS OF THE CARAVAN COULD HAVE EQUATED IT IN AN EASTERN SUMMATION. "A MAN **ENSHROUDED** IN THE **PRESENCE** OF **DEATH**, KNOWS DEATH'S DARK COLORS NO MATTER **HOW** BLACK THE NIGHT."

HE KNEW **NOTHING** OF THE CARAVAN. HE KNEW NOTHING OF THE **TERRORS** IT MIGHT HOLD. HUNGER, THIRST AND PAIN **BLIND** A MAN TO DANGERS GREATER THAN THESE.



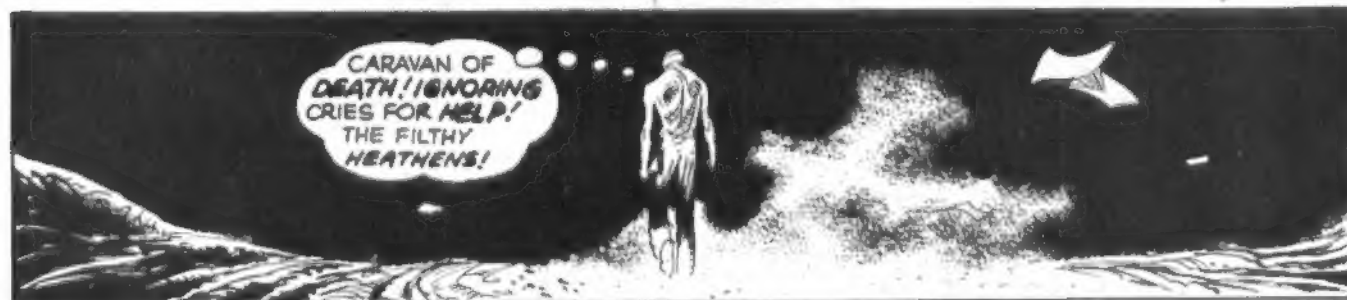
I NEED HELP! HEY! HELP!!!



AS WRAITHS STEALING AMONG HEADSTONES, **UNMINDFUL** OF EARTHLY TRIBULATIONS, THE CARAVAN SWEEPED ON INTO THE DESERT DARKNESS...

...LEAVING THE MAN TO SUFFER...

...BUT NOT TO DIE!



THE COOLNESS OF NIGHT WAS BEGINNING TO DRAW BACK FROM THE DESERT WASTES, MAKING WAY FOR THE COMING OF DAY AND THE LIFETAKING **HEAT** IT BRINGS.



DAYLIGHT
IN AN HOUR! GOT
TO FIND ME SOME
SHELTER.



THIS IS OKAY FOR
A DAY'S SLEEP.
MAYBE I'LL EVEN
HAVE ENOUGH
STRENGTH
TO TRAVEL
TONIGHT.

SLEEP, DEEP AND DREAMLESS IS THE **ONLY** ESCAPE FROM THE TORMENTS OF **THIRST** AND THE RAVAGING OF AN **EMPTY STOMACH**.



THE ONLY HOPE OF EXISTING, TO CARRY ON IN THE DESERT, IS TRAVEL BY NIGHT. THE HEAT IS LESS... BUT **THIRST** NEVER GOES AWAY!



AHHH... YOU
WON'T CURE ME OR
KILL ME... BUT
LIZARD JUICE IS
SURE FINE ON A
PARCHED
TONGUE.



COME HERE,
YOU!

THE WEAKENING TREK CONTINUED THROUGH THE ARIZONA **LOSTLAND**, THE MAN BECOMING LESS STRONG WITH **EACH** STEP. THIS WANDERING VAGRANT FEARED ONLY **LIVING ON** IN DYING **TORMENT**. HE FEARED **NOT DEATH**, FOR DEATH WAS MEANT FOR **OTHERS**. **NOT HE**.



A TOWN!
THANK GOD!





IT'S SPOOKY! THAT FREAK SHOW COMES THROUGH HERE, AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW THE WHOLE TOWN'S DESERTED!

FOLKS WOULDN'T JUST PACK UP AND LEAVE! EVERYTHING'S STILL INTACT!

THE BREAD WAS STILL FRESH... BEERS EVEN HAD HEADS ON 'EM!



HATE TO BE AN OPPORTUNIST, BUT THE GUN'S HERE FOR THE TAKING. AND I CAN USE IT! GOT TO FOLLOW THAT CAMEL WAGON TRAIN.



THIS NOTICE'LL TELL FOLKS WHAT HAPPENED TO THEIR CLOTHES AND SUPPLIES!

HOW SHOULD I SIGN IT?



I.O.U. one outfit of clothes, one sack of food goods, one pistol and a register of cash amounting to \$200 signed

Coffin



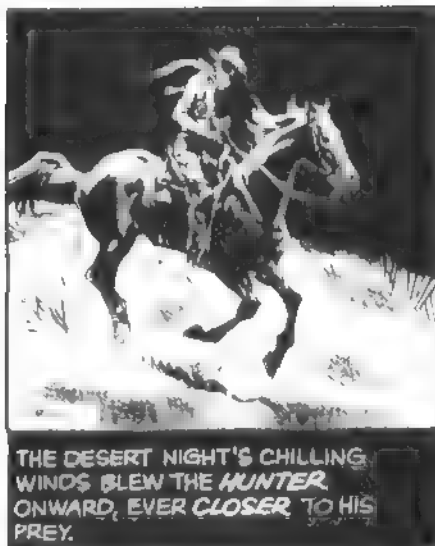
EASY FELLA. WE'RE GOING TO BE PARTNERS FOR A WHILE.



WELCOME TO CEMETERY CREEK ARIZ. POP. 153

WHY IS IT THAT I FEEL PULLED TOWARD THAT FREAK SHOW? I JUST FEEL LIKE THEY'VE BEEN HERE AND LEFT IT LIKE THIS. SO WHY DO I WANT TO CATCH UP TO THEM? WHX...?







THEN SUDDENLY,
FROM OUT OF
NOWHERE...A
GUARD DOG!



IT'S NO DOG...
IT'S A
MONSTER!



WHAT KIND
OF WATCHDOG
ARE YOU...? AND
WHAT KIND OF
PEOPLE PUT
SOMETHING LIKE
YOU OUT TO
WATCH?



WHOEVER...
WHATEVER THEY
ARE... I'M GOING
TO STOP THEM
HERE!



MURDERING
DEVILS...TASTE
SOME OF YOUR
OWN DEATH!





GET AWAY FROM HER, MONSTERS...
OR YOU'RE AS DEAD AS YOUR BUDDIES
HERE! I SEE YOUR LITTLE GAME...
LURING... **SUCKERING** WHOLE TOWNS
FULL OF PEOPLE IN TO SEE A
CARNIVAL, THEN **BUTCHERING**
THEM!

NO! YOU
DO NOT
UNDERSTAND!

IT'S YOU WHO DON'T
UNDERSTAND, SPOOK.
BACK AWAY FROM
THE GIRL! NOW!



GOT HER STAKED
OUT TO DIE, EH? I
GOT A PARTICULAR
HATRED OF STAKING
PEOPLE OUT. AND
THAT HATRED'S GOING
TO KILL YOU!

LISTEN
TO ME! DO
NOT LOOSEN
THOSE ROPES...



...YOU
DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
DOI--! NAHH!

SHUT UP,
CREEP!



YOU ARE
MAKING
A MISTAKE!
PLEASE!

THIS IS NOT
A MERE
TRAVELING
CARNIVAL--!

I KNOW! IT'S
A TRAVELING
BUTCHER
HOUSE!



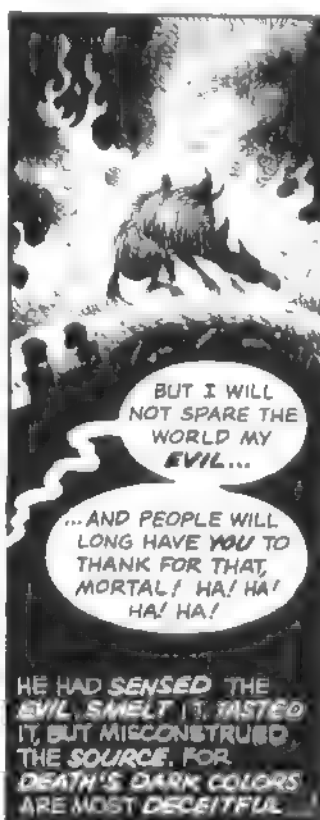
WE HAVE
TRAVELED FROM
THE FAREAST...
SEARCHING FOR A...
DEMON. WE ARE A
RELIGIOUS
ORDER!

ONE OF OUR
MONKS BEGAN
CONJURING
IN THE EVIL
ARTS...



.. HE UNLEASHED
A **HIDEOUS DEMON**
UPON THE LAND.
THE DEMON SLEW
THE MONK AND
FLED. IT WAS OUR
RESPONSIBILITY TO
CATCH IT. WE
HAVE FOLLOWED
IT HERE!

AND THE DEMON'S
THIS LITTLE GAL
HERE, HUH?



HUNTER 8

2394

AND THE WORLD WAS WITHOUT END, AND THE DAYS WERE LONG AND GOLDEN. FOR PEACE THERE WAS UPON THE LAND AND ALL THERE WAS TO SEE WAS FAIR AND UNSPOILED.

AND THE LAND WHICH SWELLED UP TO BECOME APART FROM THE SEAS WAS A LAND OF PLENTY, A LAND OF HEALING WOUNDS, A LAND OF FORGIVENESS, A LAND OF FORGETFULNESS.

AND THIS LAND WAS FREE, AND IT FORGOT THOSE WHO WALKED HERE AND SCORCHED THE EARTH WITH BLOOD AND FIRE.

AND YET IT FORGOT THOSE WHO WALKED HERE, AND DIED HERE AND STROVE IN GRIM RESOLVE TO DELIVER IT FROM THE BLOODY DARKNESS.

AND THE GREENS OF THE EARTH GREW UP TO COVER THE STAINS OF GREED AND FEAR AND UNREASON... AND TO COVER THE LONELY GRAVE OF A ONCE DYING WORLD'S LAST HERO, A WARRIOR, A LEGEND, DEMIAN HUNTER!





THIS WAS EARTH. A GOOD PLACE. AND THOSE WHO LIVED ON IT MADE OF IT EVEN BETTER
LONG AGO THE LAST OF THE WARS RAVAGED THE FACE OF THE PLANET.



THE WARS WERE DISTANT OF
MEMORY. FOR IT IS MAN'S NATURE
TO CLOSE THE BOOK OF THE PAST
AND LOOK WITH SOME MEASURE
OF HOPE TOWARD THE DAWNLIGHT.



BUT THE REMEMBRANCES
OF WAR WERE IN ABOUND.
FOR THINGS OF THE EARTH
WERE CHANGED.

THE GREAT RADIATION
HAD GIVEN ALTER TO
ALL THINGS.



YET THE ALIEN AND THE
STRANGE WERE COMMON
PLACE.



AND THERE WAS A RIGHTFUL PLACE
IN THIS NEW EXISTENCE FOR ALL
CHANGES...



...EVEN THE MACABRE

ICHUKI!

SUCH WAS THE PRECEPT
OF PEACE.





BUT, IT'S NOT ALTOGETHER A **SAD** TALE. NO INDEED... NOT AT **ALL**. FOR THE PHOENIX'S OWN SELF-IMMOLATION WAS BUT MERELY THE **SCHEME** OF THINGS.

AND THERE IS A HEARTENING FOOTNOTE TO IT ALL. FROM AMID THE ASHES OF THE FUNERAL PYRE EMERGE A TINY **WHITE WORM**. ALL SLITHERY SLICK AND PREGNANT WITH **NEW LIFE**.

THIS WORM WAS THE **ESSENCE** OF THE OLD PHOENIX. AND IT CRAWLED TO THE PEAK OF THE MORNING AND BEGAN TO GROW... GROW UNTIL IT BECAME A **NEW PHOENIX**.

WHAT OF THIS WORM, MANDRAGORA?

THE YOUNG BIRD WAS EVEN **MORE** BEAUTIFUL THAN THE **OLD**. FEATHERS ALIVE WITH **FIRE**, DRIPPING WITH SUNLIGHT EVERY COLOR OF THE RAINBOW.

BUT IT HAD **LOST** ITS WISDOM.



THE OLD PHOENIX HAD LEARNED **ALL** IT COULD CONSUME. AND ITS KNOWLEDGE **CONSUMED** IT!

FOR ONCE YOU LEARN **ALL**... WHERE CAN YOU GO BUT TO BEGIN **AGAIN**?

THUS THE NEW BIRD, FULL OF WONDER, FLAME AND HISTORY, FLEW OFF TO BEGIN **AGAIN** HIS QUEST FOR EVERYTHING.

AND WHAT OF THE **OLD** PHOENIX, FATHER?

GONE. **FOREVER**. GONE TO BECOME PART OF THE AGES.

AND THUS IT SEEMS THAT THE OLD AGE OF **EARTH** IS GONE. AND WE HERE... **ALL** OF US IN THIS **NEW** LIFE ARE BUT...

...A SINGLE **WHITE WORM**?

PREGNANT WITH LIFE TO COME.

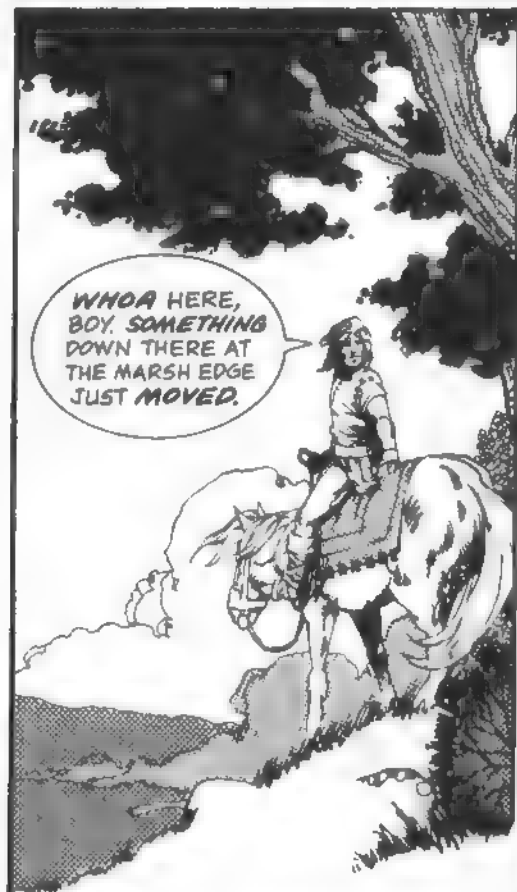
I WOULD NOT BOTHER YOU WITH ANCIENT **PARABLES**, KARAS, BUT OLD MEN WHO REMEMBER THINGS LONG GONE BY, TEND TO RAMBLE, FRIGHTENED BY THE **FUTURE**.

ENOUGH OF YOUR **LESSONS**. WHY NOT RIDE UP TO THE RIDGE AND SEE IF **TRAVELERS** APPROACH? THEY'RE **OVERDUE**.



NO ONE TO BE SEEN,
GOLDFLAX. MAY AS WELL
GO HOME AND CURRY YOU
DOWN.

MANDRAGORA'S VISITORS
CAN'T GET HERE BEFORE
SUN UP NOW ANYWAY.



WHOA HERE,
BOY. SOMETHING
DOWN THERE AT
THE MARSH EDGE
JUST MOVED.



PLEASE... **HELP...**
I AM **MURDERED!**
?CHOKE!?



YOU SEEM
HACKED AND TIRED
BUT I THINK **NOT**
MURDERED...
ENTIRELY.



WE'LL TAKE YOU
HOME AND TEND
TO YOUR WOUNDS!



I HAVE NEEDS TO
SEE... **MANDRAGORA?**

BROWNE LOE!
WHAT'S HAPPENED?

I FOUND THIS
MAN AT THE
SWAMP'S EDGE,
FATHER



HOW DID THIS **HAPPEN**,
BROWNE LOE? AND WHAT
OF THE COMPANY IN WHICH
YOU RODE?

WE... THE EASTERN MEMBERS
OF THE WHITE COUNCIL RECEIVED
YOUR SUMMONS. WE RODE IN
HASTE.

NEARLY HERE, WE WERE
SET UPON BY... **NO, NO...**
IMPOSSIBLE!

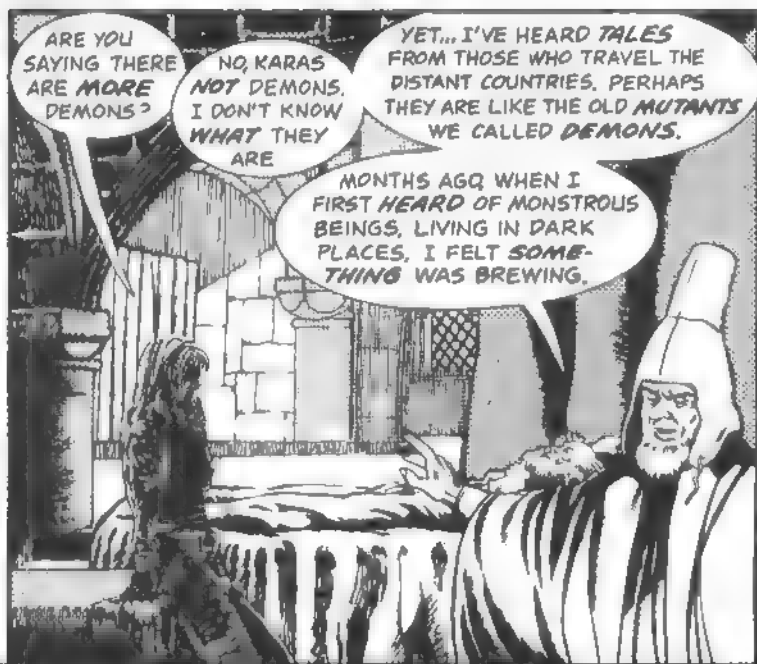
BY
WHAT?

BY... **DEMONS?**
COULD IT HAVE
BEEN?



DEMONS? THERE ARE NO MORE DEMONS ALIVE. IT'S BEEN TWENTY YEARS--!

THEN... IT HAS COME SOONER THAN I SUSPECTED.

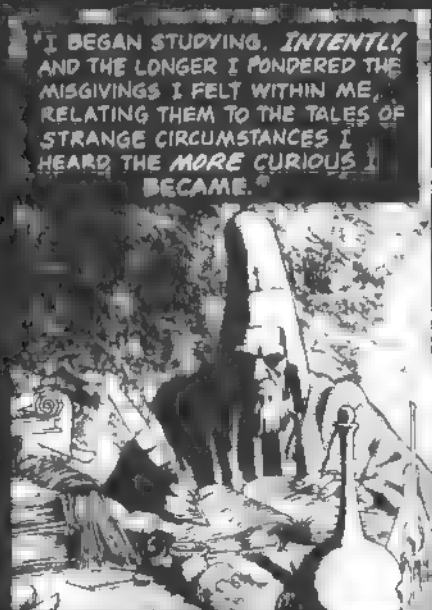


ARE YOU SAYING THERE ARE MORE DEMONS?

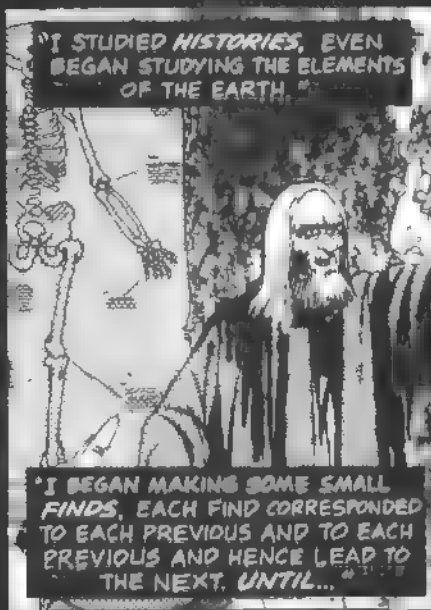
NO, KARAS NOT DEMONS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY ARE

YET... I'VE HEARD TALES FROM THOSE WHO TRAVEL THE DISTANT COUNTRIES. PERHAPS THEY ARE LIKE THE OLD MUTANTS WE CALLED DEMONS.

MONTHS AGO WHEN I FIRST HEARD OF MONSTROUS BEINGS, LIVING IN DARK PLACES, I FELT SOMETHING WAS BREWING.



"I BEGAN STUDYING, INTENTLY, AND THE LONGER I PONDERED THE MISGIVINGS I FELT WITHIN ME, RELATING THEM TO THE TALES OF STRANGE CIRCUMSTANCES I HEARD THE MORE CURIOUS BECAME."



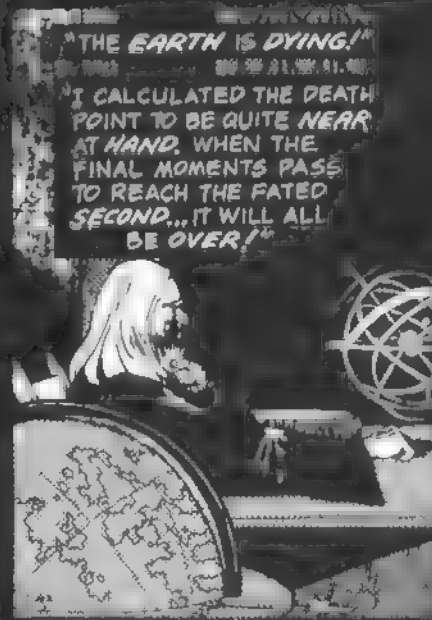
"I STUDIED HISTORIES, EVEN BEGAN STUDYING THE ELEMENTS OF THE EARTH."

"I BEGAN MAKING SOME SMALL FINDS, EACH FIND CORRESPONDED TO EACH PREVIOUS AND TO EACH PREVIOUS AND HENCE LEAD TO THE NEXT, UNTIL..."



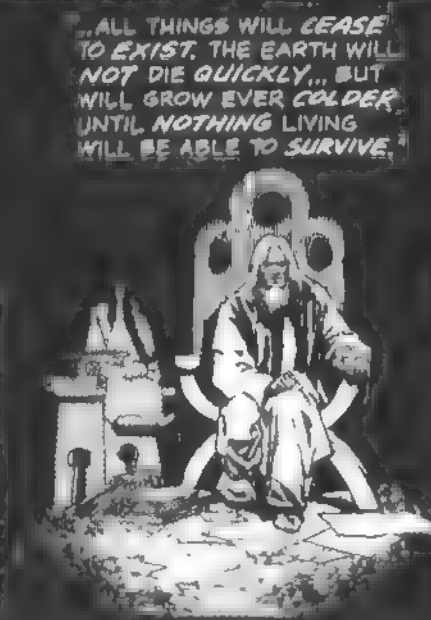
"...I FOUND IT! AND ONCE I HAD MADE THE AWESOME DISCOVERY, I WANTED TO SEE NO MORE. BUT MY RESEARCHING HAD PROVED CONCLUSIVELY."

"IT WAS MORE THAN CERTAIN."

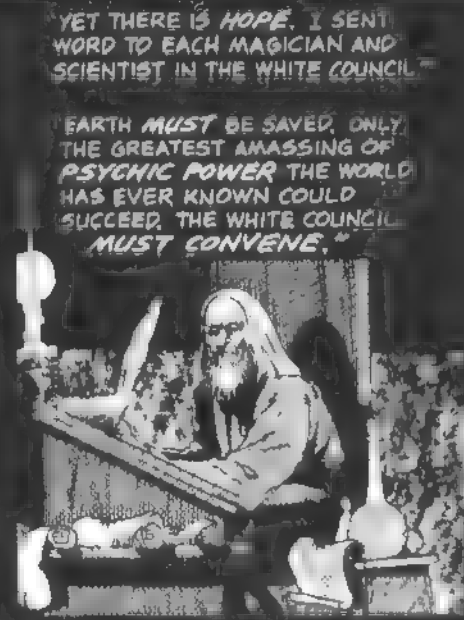


"THE EARTH IS DYING!"

"I CALCULATED THE DEATH POINT TO BE QUITE NEAR AT HAND. WHEN THE FINAL MOMENTS PASS TO REACH THE FATED SECOND... IT WILL ALL BE OVER!"



"ALL THINGS WILL CEASE TO EXIST. THE EARTH WILL NOT DIE QUICKLY... BUT WILL GROW EVER COLDER UNTIL NOTHING LIVING WILL BE ABLE TO SURVIVE."



YET THERE IS HOPE. I SENT WORD TO EACH MAGICIAN AND SCIENTIST IN THE WHITE COUNCIL.

"EARTH MUST BE SAVED. ONLY THE GREATEST AMASSING OF PSYCHIC POWER THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN COULD SUCCEED. THE WHITE COUNCIL MUST CONVENE."

"THUS A RIDER WAS DISPATCHED
CARRYING ONE HUNDRED
HASTILY SCRAWLED PLEAS."

"ONCE THE COUNCIL HAS MET, THE
MIGHTIEST SPELL EVER CAST
WILL BE EVOKED TO SAVE
THIS PLANET."

WHAT WE MUST DO IS STOP
THE ROTATION OF THE
EARTH FOR ONE FULL
MINUTE! THUS KEEPING
THIS GLOBE FROM REACHING
ITS APPOINTED MOMENT
OF DEATH!"

WHY TRY TO STOP THE
ROTATION OF THE EARTH?

CONSIDER. THE EARTH REVOLVES
WITHIN AN ENCRUSTING TIME
ELEMENT... LIKE THE SKIN
UPON AN APPLE.

IF THE PLANET ITSELF CAN BE
PHYSICALLY HALTED FOR ONLY
A MINUTE, THEN THE TIME SHELL-
CRUST WILL CONTINUE ON WITH-
OUT THE PLANET... LEAVING IT!

THUS WHEN THE EARTH BEGINS
TO MOVE AGAIN... WHEN OUR
POWER TO HOLD IT BREAKS...
IT WILL TAKE ON A NEW TIME-
SHELL. A DIFFERENT TIME
OR DIMENSION.

WITH THE NEW TIME-SHELL
THE EARTH WILL LIVE, BECAUSE
THE FATED SECOND OF
EXTINCTION WILL NEVER COME.
IT DOESN'T EXIST IN THE NEW
SHELL.

THE DEATH MOMENT WILL BE
LEFT BEHIND IN THE OLD
SHELL. IN THE NEW TIME
THERE IS NO MOMENT TO DIE

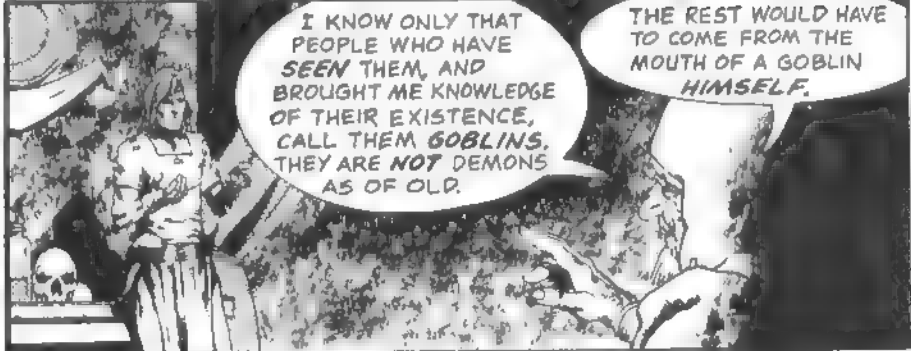
FATHER, I FIND THIS
CONFUSING BUT I DO
BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND!
IF YOUR SCIENCES TELL
YOU THESE THINGS, THEN
I CAN'T QUESTION.
BUT...!



BUT WHAT
KARAS?

THESE DEMONS
OR WHATEVER
THEY ARE...

HOW DO THEY
FIT IN? DO
YOU KNOW
SOMETHING
OF THEM?



I KNOW ONLY THAT
PEOPLE WHO HAVE
SEEN THEM, AND
BROUGHT ME KNOWLEDGE
OF THEIR EXISTENCE,
CALL THEM **GOBLINS**.
THEY ARE NOT DEMONS
AS OF OLD.

THE REST WOULD HAVE
TO COME FROM THE
MOUTH OF A GOBLIN
HIMSELF.



THEN I'LL BRING
YOU ONE TO
QUESTION.

NO! DON'T GO NEAR
THEM, BOY...THEY ARE
LIKE MAD DOGS ON
FIRE WITH BLOOD
TASTE!

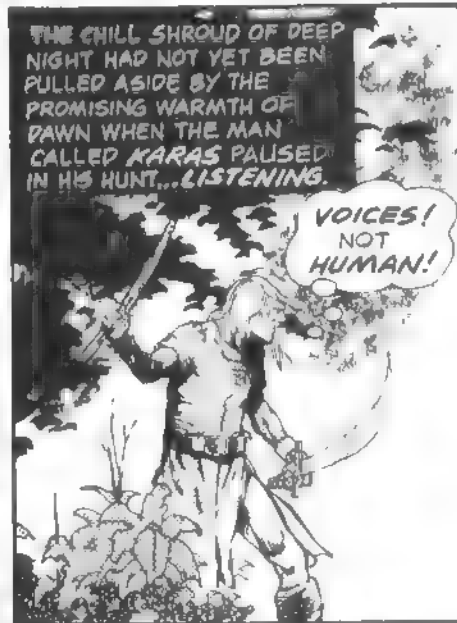


TWENTY YEARS AGO
I LIVED IN A PEACEFUL
VILLAGE WITH MY
MOTHER AND FATHER.
MUTANTS DESTROYED
THE VILLAGE AND
RAPED AND BUTCHERED
EVERYONE. I ESCAPED.
MANDRAGORA FOUND
ME AND RAISED
ME.



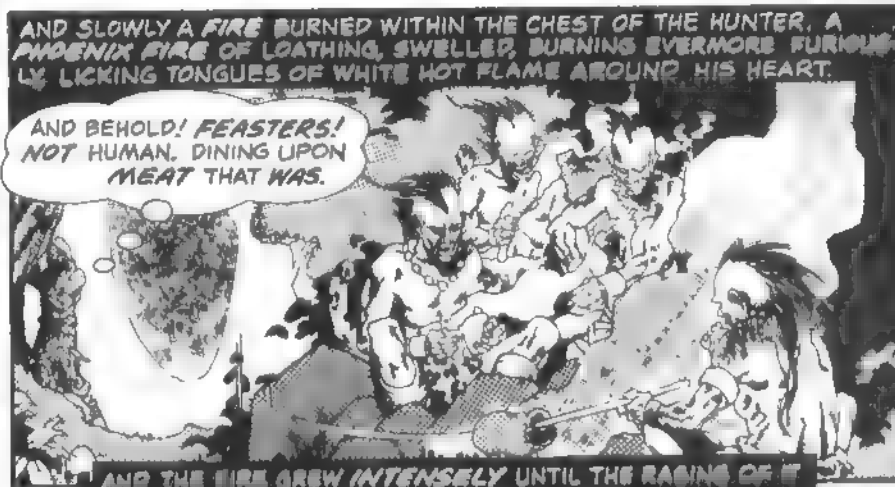
MONSTROUS **MUTANTS**
RAVAGED MY FAMILY AND PEOPLE,
NOW THERE ARE **MORE** MONSTERS
ON THE LOOSE.

THIS IS THE LEAST I CAN DO
IN MEMORY OF THE GHOSTS OF
PHARMARK PHAL.



THE CHILL SHROUD OF DEEP
NIGHT HAD NOT YET BEEN
PULLED ASIDE BY THE
PROMISING WARMTH OF
DAWN WHEN THE MAN
CALLED **KARAS** PAUSED
IN HIS HUNT...LISTENING.

VOICES!
NOT
HUMAN!

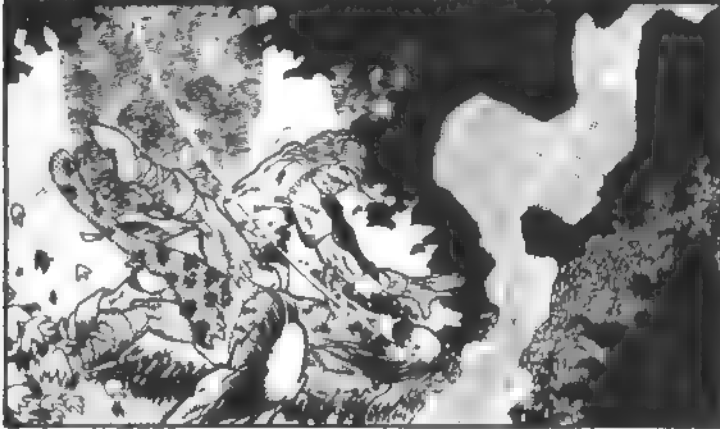


AND SLOWLY A FIRE BURNED WITHIN THE CHEST OF THE HUNTER, A
PHOENIX FIRE OF LOATHING, SWELLED, BURNING EVERMORE FURIOUSLY
LY LICKING TONGUES OF WHITE HOT FLAME AROUND HIS HEART.

AND BEHOLD! **FEASTERS!**
NOT HUMAN. DINING UPON
MEAT THAT WAS.

AND THE FIRE GREW INTENSELY UNTIL THE RAGING OF IT
BLINDED HIS EYES TO FEAR.

THERE CAN BE BUT ONE ADVANTAGE IN UNEVEN COMBAT...



...SAVAGERY!



QUICKLY, WITH CRUEL PRECISION,
THE HUNTER SURGICALLY TOOK
THE LEAD IN THE BLINDING
SLAUGHTER.



AHHEEE!
A MONSTER!
FLEEAAA!



...UNTIL THERE WAS BUT
ONE MUTANT REMAINING.

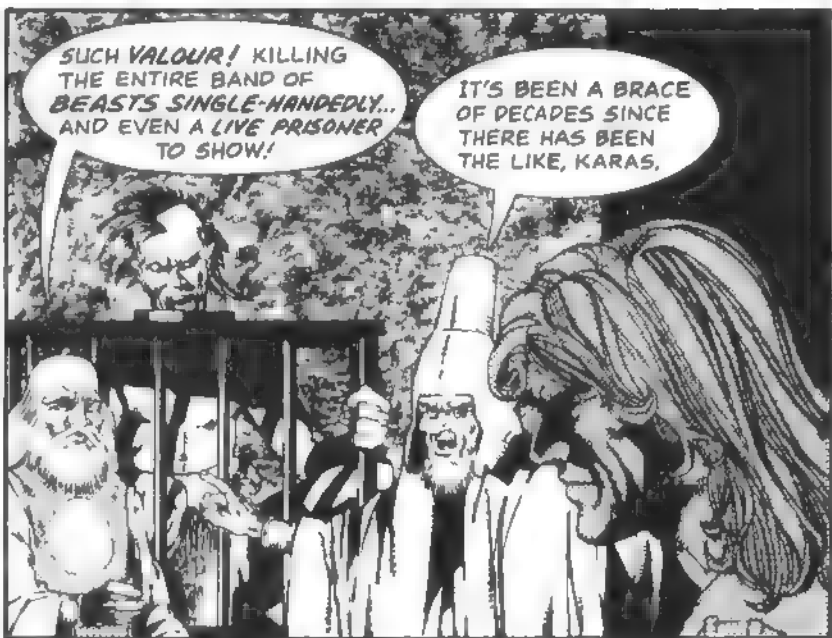
QUIT SQUEALING, WORM!
YOU ENJOYED BROILING
A MAN! NOW ENJOY IT
WHILE A MAN BROILS YOU!

WHEN YOU'RE
DONE ON THAT
SIDE, YOU'VE
QUESTIONS
TO ANSWER!



SUCH VALOUR! KILLING
THE ENTIRE BAND OF
BEASTS SINGLE-HANDEDLY...
AND EVEN A LIVE PRISONER
TO SHOW!

IT'S BEEN A BRACE
OF DECADES SINCE
THERE HAS BEEN
THE LIKE, KARAS,



YOU SLIME! STINKING BLOOD WORM! I'LL SUCK THE JELLY FROM YOUR EYES FOR THIS!

MANDRAGORA, MY JOB IS THROUGH. QUESTION THIS... THING IF YOU WILL!

AND BROWNE LOE, DON'T SING THE PRAISES OF SOMEONE WHO HAS NO BETTER SENSE THAN TO ATTACK A WAR PARTY OF BUTCHERS.

YOU PRAISE AN ASS.

THIS IT BEGAN THAT NIGHT SOMETHING TERRIBLE. THE RE-STIRRING OF A LEGEND OF MEMORIES!



I REMEMBER... VAGUELY! THERE WAS ANOTHER WHO FOUGHT THE MUTANTS... IN PHALMARK PHAL! A BIG MAN. HE SAVED ME... SMILED AT ME.

COULD HE HAVE BEEN THE ONE THE LEGENDS SPEAK OF...? HUNTER!



KARAS! I HAVE QUESTIONED THE MUTANT! WILL YOU HEAR IT?

FROM YOU. NOT FROM IT.



I AM NOT THE FIRST SCIENTIST TO FIND THE EARTH IS ENDING. THE MUTANT IS OF A RACE CALLED THE OUPHE. WARLIKE MUTANTS BRED FOR EVIL INTENT BY ONE NAMED YAUST!

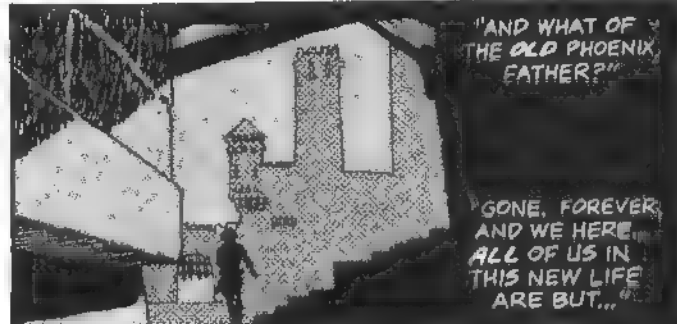
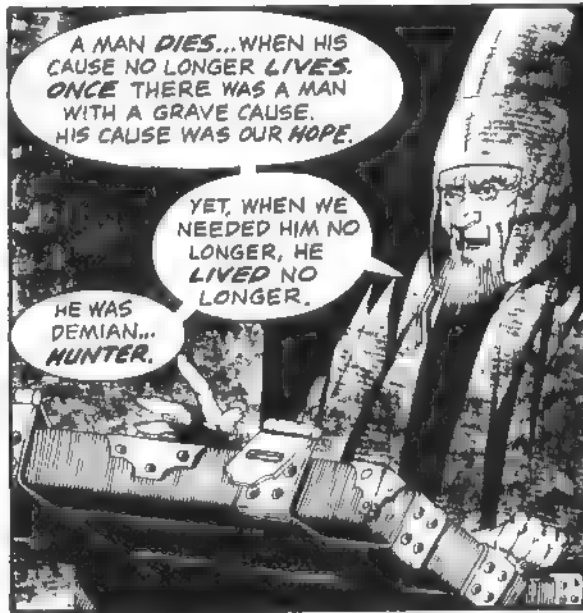
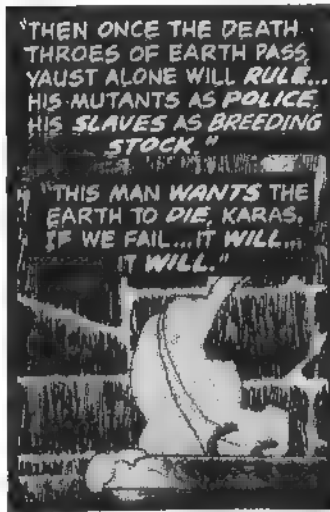
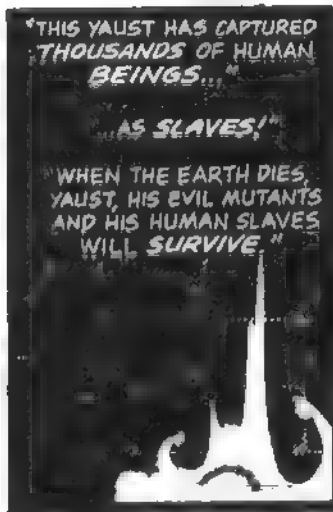
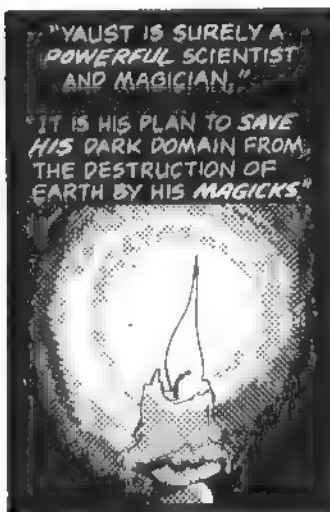
YAUST DWELLS IN AN IMPREGNABLE STRONGHOLD OF HIS OWN DEVISE IN THE EASTMOST MOUNTAINS

YAUST KNOWS THE EARTH IS ENDING AND PLANS TO SURVIVE.



HIS SPIES INFORMED HIM OF MY FINDINGS AND MY INTENT TO BRING THE WHITE COUNCIL TOGETHER IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD

YAUST SENT THIS BAND OF GOBLINS TO FOUL US.



PROLOGUE

TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT, ISN'T IT? INSPECTOR SMYTHE. TONIGHT'S THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE VERY FIRST HACKER MURDER!

IT WAS THIRTY YEARS AGO THIS NIGHT THAT THE HACKER BUTCHERED HIS VERY FIRST SCOTLAND YARD DETECTIVE.

THAT WAS EVEN BEFORE YOU WERE ON THE FORCE... BEFORE YOU MADE YOUR WAY UP TO CHIEF OF DETECTIVES. WASN'T IT, SMYTHE?

EVERY TEN YEARS SINCE THE HACKER HAS STRUCK... HIS FIRST VICTIM ALWAYS THE CHIEF OF DETECTIVES.

YOU COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT THE HACKER WOULD STRIKE AGAIN...

...IT SEEMED INSANE... IMPOSSIBLE THAT THE SAME HACKER WHO SLAUGHTERED HIS FIRST VICTIM THIRTY YEARS AGO... WOULD STRIKE AGAIN TONIGHT! BUT SOMETHING IN YOUR MIND SIMPLY COULD NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY.

AND HE DOES... STRIKE! YOU ARE HIS TARGET, SMYTHE! YOU... THE CHIEF OF DETECTIVES!

BUT YOU ARE READY FOR HIM, TOO! YOU ARE NOT REALLY SURPRISED WHEN HE LEAPS FROM THE DARKNESS AT YOU... CHOPPING, HACKING WITH HIS DEADLY CLEAVER.

AND BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT SURPRISED... YOU LIVE!

MY GOD! HE'S BACK AGAIN! THE HACKER IS BACK!

HIDE FROM THE HACKER



YOU KNEEL
THERE, SMYTHE...
IN THE FOG-CRUSTED
STREET, SHAKING!
QUIVERING! HE WAS
SO STRONG... SO
DEADLY... JUST LIKE
ALL THE TIMES WHEN
HE MURDERED BEFORE!
BUT THIS TIME THE
HACKER SLIPPED UP!

THE HACKER'S LAST STAND!

HE HAD NEVER FAILED BEFORE,
HAD HE, SMYTHE? YOU REMEMBER
BECAUSE YOU WERE THERE...
TWENTY SHORT YEARS AGO!

I-IT'S 'ORRIBLE,
OFFICER! A-A BOY
DELIVERED A
HATBOX TO THE
MRS....

...A-AND THE
INSPECTOR'S
'EAD ROLLED
OUT!

YOU REMEMBER TOO, WHAT
YOUR PARTNER, INSPECTOR
YARDLEY, HAD TO SAY
ABOUT THE MURDER...

TEN YEARS AGO WE CAPTURED
A KILLER WITH THE SAME
METHOD OF OPERATION!

EITHER
ANOTHER
MADMAN HAS
ADOPTED HIS
STYLE... OR
WE EXECUTED
THE WRONG
MAN!

ALEX
TOTH

THEN AT LAST
YOU CAUGHT
THE HACKER.
OR SO YOU
THOUGHT.
EH, SMYTHE?

HE'S THE
SON OF THE
MAN YOU
CAUGHT TEN
YEARS AGO!

BUT WHILE YOUR SUSPECT WAS
IN CUSTODY THERE WAS ANOTHER
MURDER... YOUR PARTNER,
INSPECTOR YARDLY!

W-WE MUST
RELEASE
THE MAN WE
BROUGHT
IN...
'CHOKE!'

OH, DEAR
GOD!

NO!

THE MURDERS
STOPPED THEN...
FOR TEN SHORT
YEARS!

THE HACKER
WAS ALL BUT
FORGOTTEN.
EH, SMYTHE?

THERE WAS
TEN YEARS OF
BUSINESS AS
USUAL... AND
THEN...

...THE
HACKER
STRUCK
AGAIN!

ONLY THIS
TIME YOU
LEARNED THE
NAUSEATING
MOTIVE FOR
THE HACKER'S
CRIMES!

'GAK!'
N-NO!
H-HUMAN
FLESH!

YOU LEARNED
OF THE SECRET
GOURMET CLUB
THAT MET ONCE
EVERY TEN
YEARS FOR THE
RAREST OF
GASTATORY
DELIGHTS...!

HE TRIED TO KILL
YOU THEN TOO, SMYTHE... THE
MAN YOU THOUGHT WAS THE
HACKER. THE MAN WHO TURNED
OUT TO BE THE MAD CHEF!

BUT YOU GOT TO
HIM FIRST, AND
ONLY AS HE WAS
DYING DID YOU
QUESTION THAT
HE WAS THE
HACKER AT
ALL!

HA! HA!
THE... 'ACKER...
WILL... BE... BACK,
COPPER...!

NOW IT WAS TRUE!
THE HACKER WAS
BACK! AND AS
SUCCEEDING CHIEF
OF DETECTIVES,
YOU KNOW YOU
ARE THE HACKER'S
NEXT INTENDED
VICTIM!

NO USE CRYING ABOUT
HIS ESCAPING AGAIN!
I'D JUST BETTER
MAKE CERTAIN
THAT I CAPTURE
HIM NEXT
TIME!

INSPECTOR!
WE'VE JUST 'AD
ODD REPORTS
THAT A MAN
ANSWERING THE
'ACKER'S
DESCRIPTION
IS LOOSE!

'E'S RUNNING AROUND
IN THE SOHO SECTION!

I'M ON MY WAY!

BUT YOU ARE
CONFIDENT THAT
YOU CAN AT LAST
MAKE THE BLOODY
GHOUL PAY FOR
HIS CRIMES!

THE INVESTIGATION
ONCE AGAIN CENTERS
WHERE IT HAD TWICE
BEFORE... IN SOHO'S
REDLIGHT DISTRICT!

I NEED SOME
INFORMATION... ABOUT A
MAN, ROUGHLY MY SIZE,
WHO WEARS A CLOAK
AND SLOUCH
HAT!

PANAMA RED 'AS
A CALLER LOOKS
LIKE 'AT! SHE
'ANGS IT AT
'THE BLACK
SWAN!'

'THE BLACK-SWAN PUB' WHERE ONE HAS THE PICK OF WHATEVER SORT OF
WOMAN, OR SOCIAL DISEASE, IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE...

'RED'? AYE,
SHE'S IN BACK!
BUT WATCH IT,
GUV... SHE'S
GOT A MEAN
MOOD ON
T'NIGHT!

GIT OUT'A IT,
MC'SORLEY, OR I'LL
LAY Y'OPEN, HERE
'N' NOW!

YOU THREATENIN'
ME, YA...?URK!

SO MUCH FOR THE
MERCHANT SEAMAN!
YOU DID HIM QUITE
WELL, MISS
PANAMA...!

I BEEN ON THE
STREETS SINCE I WAS
THIRTEEN, DUCKS! I CAN
HANDLE THE LIKES O'
HIM ANYTIME!

YOU HAVE A FREQUENT CALLER
THAT YOU MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO
'HANDLE'... IF IT CAME
TO IT!

THE MAN
IN THE BLACK HAT
AND CLOAK...?

I DON'T KNOW
WOT YER GOIN'
ON ABOUT...!
BUT I'VE GOT
TO GO NOW!

WAIT, NOW...! I KNOW YOU'RE AFRAID!
AND WITH GOOD REASON!
LET ME HELP YOU!
I BELIEVE YOUR
CLOAKED CALLER
IS THE HACKER!

GOR! NO!

WAIT!
PLEASE!

BUT SHE WILL NOT WAIT WILL SHE SAYTHE...

LORD...! TOO LATE!
THE HACKER SAW US IN
THERE AND SILENCED
HER BEFORE SHE
COULD BETRAY
HIM...!

EVER
AGAIN!



THE HACKER ESCAPED
AGAIN, EH, SMYTHE?
HE HAD **BROKEN** HIS
PATTERN OF FIRST
BUTCHERING THE
CHIEF OF DETECTIVES.
YOU HAD FOULED HIM
THIS TIME! **YOU** MADE
HIM **ANGRY!** ANGRY
ENOUGH TO KILL...
AGAIN AND AGAIN IN
THE DAYS THAT
FOLLOWED, ANGRY
ENOUGH TO SEND HIS
VICTIMS **HEADS** TO
THE POLICE, **FLAUNTING**
HIS CRIMES...**TAUNTING**
YOU AND ALL OF
SCOTLAND YARD AGAIN
AND AGAIN!

AND YOU
CONTINUE TO
COMB THE
SOHO REDLIGHT
DISTRICT, DON'T
YOU, SMYTHE...
IN SEARCH OF
A CLUE... ANY
CLUE TO THE
WHEREABOUTS
OF THE
HACKER!



COME 'ERE,
LUV...! OY' GOT
SOMETHIN'
T' TELL YA!



LOOK, OY CAN'T
BE SEEN TALKIN'
T' YA... BUT PANAMA
RED WAS M' DEAR
FRIEND, SHE
WAS, SEE?

'AN' THAT
GHOUL IN
BLACK,
HE--!

YOU MEAN
THE HACKER??!



CAN YOU TELL ME
WHERE TO FIND HIM?
WE'LL GIVE YOU OUR
PROTECTION!
HE WON'T BE
ABLE TO GET
AT YOU... I
PROMISE
YOU!

HAR! DON'
MAKE ME
LAFK...!

ANYWAYS,
RED USED T'
MEET HIM AT TH'
FISHMONGERS'
PIER!

AN' THAT'S ALL
I C'N TELL YA...!
NOW I'LL 'OP IT! AN'
REMEMBER... WE
AIN'T NEVER
MET BEFORE!
TA!



THE PIER.
THAT'S WHERE
YOU MUST GO
SMYTHE! THE
PIER... FOR
THE HACKER'S
LAST STAND!

THE HACKER CAN'T BE A
FISHMONGER OR FISHERMAN!
NO AMOUNT OF WASHING CAN
GET RID OF THE FISH SMELL!
AND I WOULD'VE NOTICED
IT DURING OUR PAST
ENCOUNTERS!

HELP! HELP! PAAAAAAA

LOOK!

W'IT'S TH'
BLOODY
'ACKER!

POLICE,
HERE! LET
ME THROUGH,
MEN....!



LET'S DON'T
AVE TH' GENT
DO ALL TH'
WORK! LET'S
'ELP 'IM,
MATES!

THEY HAVE
GOOD INTENTIONS,
SMYTHE... BUT
IT IS YOU
WHO HAVE THE
ENTHUSIASM!
YOU OUTPACE
THE FISHERMAN
AND CLOSE IN
ON THE CRAZED
KILLER ALL
ALONE!
BUT...

TOO LATE,
AGAIN! AND
THE HACKER'S
GONE!



YET, HE
IS **NOT**
GONE!
HE'S **HERE**,
IN THE
SHADOWS!
WAITING!
WAITING
JUST FOR
YOU, SMYTHE!

N-NO!
YOU'LL NOT
HAVE **ME**,
MADMAN!

AND
HE SEEMS
YOUNGER
MORE
ENERGETIC...

BUT
YOU **CAN**
BEAT HIM
SMYTHE!
YOU
MUST!

URK!!

DESPERATION
GIVES YOU
STRENGTH...
PURY! IT
IS **HIS** LIFE
OR **YOURS**,
INSPECTOR!

...NOT AT
ALL LIKE HE
WAS WHEN
LAST YOU
FOUGHT!

BUT...
IT CAN'T
BE! YOU?

WHY
NOT,
GUV?



A black and white illustration showing a man with a beard and a woman. The man is on the left, looking towards the right. The woman is on the right, looking up at him with a distressed expression. A knife is visible in her back, with the handle protruding. The background consists of simple, angular lines suggesting a landscape or architectural structure.

HACKER!!

NOOOO!

KASHOK!

“YOU OVERLOOKED SOMETHING, SMYTHE — ALL THE WHILE YOU WERE OUT SEEKING CANNIBALS AND CHEFS, YOU FORGOT

“EVEN NOW, ON CHILL, FOGGY LONDON

ALL THE WHILE YOU WERE OUT
SEEKING CANNIBALS AND
CHEFS, YOU FORGOT
THAT BEFORE A COOK
CAN PREPARE A MEAT
COURSE, HE HAS TO
VISIT ..THE ..
BUTCHER!!

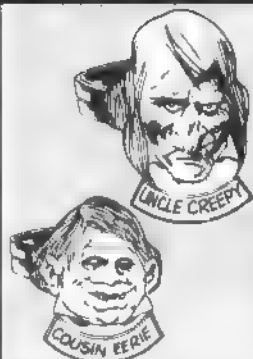
BUTCHER!!

A WARNING
HIDE —
HIDE!

HIDE
FROM THE
HACKER!

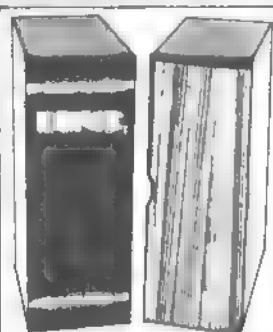


HIDE FROM THE HACKER!!



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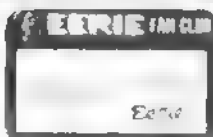
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HERE ARE 3 FABULOUS SETS OF CREEPY-EERIE MASKS!

PAPA WOODOO

THE MAN NAMED GOLD!

THE CENTURY TURNED OLD AND AT LONG LAST, SETTLED ITSELF INTO THE PAGES OF *HISTORY* AND INTO THE *MEMORIES* OF THE ELDERLY. IT TURNED INTO A *NEW* CENTURY, THE YEAR WAS 1910.

THERE WAS A NEW WORLD THE OLD WORLD HAD TURNED TO DUST AND BARRIERS, AND THE DAYS OF THE ANCIENT WOODOO MAN WERE PASSING. THE WORLD NO LONGER HAD NEED FOR HEROES...

...ESPECIALLY BLACK HEROES LIKE SPOOK AND CRACKERMEYER!



IS PAPA HOME?

YES HE IS...! WOULD Y'ALL LIKE TO SPEAK TO HIM?

YES M'AM... BUT WE ORATHER HIM SPEAK TO US!

CRACKERMEYER, THE WOODOO GIANT, WAS NO MORE! HE HAD FOUGHT UNTIL ALL THE FIGHT WAS OUT OF HIM, AND THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT BUT A STOOPED, PEACEFUL OLD MAN!

HIS ERA WAS GONE, AND LIKE MOST OLD MEN, HE WAS LONG AGO LEFT IN IT, DREAMING THE DREAMS OF OLD RETELLING THE LEGENDS LEFT BEHIND!

THEY CALLED HIM PAPA WOODOO NOW... THOSE THAT REMEMBERED... THOSE THAT BELIEVED. FOR TOO LONG AGO, THE NAMES CRACKERMEYER AND SPOOK HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN, AND THE NEW WORLD WAS A HERO-LESS, SAD WORLD!

ETHEL? WHO IS THAT AT THE DOOR? I'M EXPECTING SOME VERY SPECIAL FRIENDS TODAY. I DON'T CARE TO SEE ANYONE ELSE BUT MY VERY SPECIAL FRIENDS!

I'M SURE THERE ARE THE ONES YOU'RE WAITING ON, PAPA.

WELL, WELL! IT /S MY VERY SPECIAL FRIENDS, THERE'S KATHLEEN O'NEAL, MY LOVELY IRISH BEAUTY, AND THERE'S GIGGLING MARIANNE SMITHERMAN, AND HERE IS YOUNG TOM BUCKMAN AND LITTLE BROTHER CHARLES, AND MY GOOD FRIEND WILLIAM S. BROWN JR. COME IN, CHILDREN, COME IN.

HELLO, PAPA.

HIYAW, PAWPAW. WE COME'D TA HEAR A STORY, PAWPAW.



YEAH, PAPA, WOULD YOU TELL US ANOTHER STORY?

YEAHHH, WE WANT TO HEAR A STORY ABOUT COWBOYS!

YEAH! LIKE THE ONES IN THE NEWSPAPERS! LIKE BUTCH CASSIDY!

BUTCH CASSIDY?
MY, MY.

WELL, ALL I KNOW ABOUT BUTCH CASSIDY AND HIS WILD BUNCH IS WHAT I READ IN THE PAPERS. BUT I READ HERE RECENTLY THAT OL' BUTCH AND HIS OUTLAW FRIENDS LEFT THE COUNTRY... ESCAPED TO A FOREIGN LAND, SO HE'S GONE.

AWWWW, SHUCKS!

BUT I DO REMEMBER ANOTHER COWBOY. HE LIVED A WHILE BACK, HE FOUGHT INDIANS.

OH BOY! COWBOYS N' INJUNS!

VEGGIE, AND THIS COWBOY WAS NAMED GOLD! RUFE GOLD.

AND RUFE GOLD CAME FROM WEST TEXAS! HE WAS A WRANGLER ON A RANCH, HAD A HANDSOME WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN MUCH YOUNGER THAN ANY OF YOU.

AW, HE WASN'T NO REAL COWBOY THEN. REAL COWBOYS DON'T GET MARRIED AND HAVE BABIES! COWBOYS ARE TOUGH! AND WEAR WHITE HATS.

WELL, GOLD WAS TOUGH. IT TAKES A REAL TOUGH MAN TO LOVE HIS FAMILY SO MUCH THAT HE WANTS TO WORK HIMSELF TO DEATH TO KEEP THEM SAFE AND HAPPY. AND GOLD DIDN'T WEAR A WHITE HAT. IN FACT, RUFE GOLD DIDN'T EVEN WEAR WHITE SKIN. HE WORE BLACK SKIN. LIKE SOME OF US HERE. AND THIS IS HIS STORY...



RIFE GOLD LIVED WHEN TIMES WERE **HARD** FOR THE BLACK MAN. **HARD** FOR **EVERY** MAN. THE GREAT WAR WAS OVER. THERE WERE NO MORE **FREE** SLAVES... ONLY THOSE THAT SLAVED FOR THE **DOLLAR!**

DON'T DRINK SO **FAST**, HONEY. SUPPOSE YOU CAN WORK UP AN **APPETITE** FOR MY CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS TONIGHT?

RIFE GOLD WAS THE HARDEST WORKING WRANGLER ON THE ENTIRE DOUBLE ROCKING R RANCH. **NOBODY** WAS BETTER AT BREAKING HORSES, STRINGING BARB WIRE, CUTTING CATTLE OR,

... **LOVING A WIFE.**

THAT'S THE **ONLY** REASON I WORK AS HARD AS I DO, GIRL. SO I CAN **EAT** AS MUCH OF YOUR GOOD **COOKING** AS I CAN!

THAT THE **ONLY** REASON YOU WORK SO HARD, RIFE GOLD?

WELL...THE ONLY **OTHER** REASON I CAN THINK OF IS SO I CAN BUY MY WIFE AND BABIES THE VERY BEST **PRETTIES** MONEY CAN BUY. RIGHT NOW I'M WORKING TO BUY MRS. GOLD A **DIAMOND STUDD COOKING POT!**

THINK **THAT'LL** MAKE THE **COOKING** TASTE BETTER?

NO...BUT IT LL MATCH THE **DIAMONDS** THAT **SPARKLE** IN YOUR EYES!

MY, MY, **BEWARE** A HUNGRY MAN SPEAKING **SUGAR COATED WORDS!** HE MIGHT JUST BE IN **LOVE!** SEE YOU FOR SUPPER, **MR. GOLD!**

AWRIGHT NOW. **WHO** SAID THEY GOT A **WILD HORSE** TO RIDE, COWBOYS?

THERE NEVER WAS ANYTHING GLORIOUS ABOUT **WORKING HARD**... AND RANCH WORK IS AS **HARD** AS IT **COMES**. UP BEFORE THE ROOSTERS, WHILE ITS STILL **BLACK AS NIGHT**.



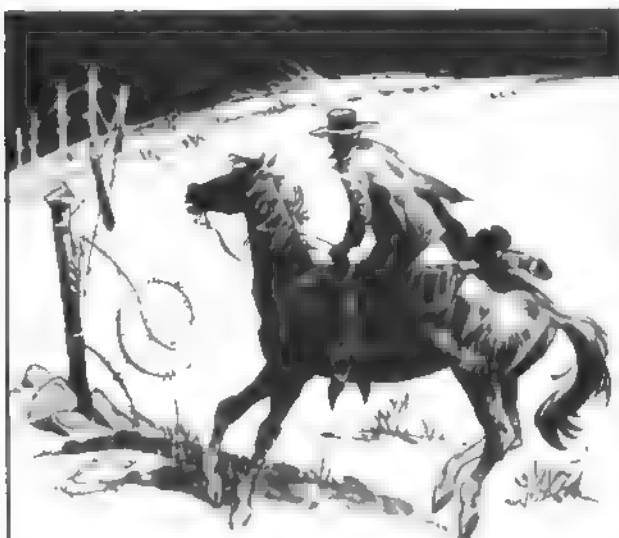
...**LEAVING** THAT **LITTLE CORNER** OF **WARM SECURITY** YOU'VE **SOMEHOW** **MANAGED** TO **BUILD** FOR YOURSELF.



...**CUTTING** A **PONY** **OUT** OF THE **REMAUDA**, **STRAPPING** YOUR **WORN** **OUT** **SADDLE** **AROUND** HIM, **CUSSING** THE **DARK**, **CUSSING** THE **COLD** AND THE **JOB**...



...AND **CUSSING** YOURSELF WHEN YOU **WAKE UP** TO **REALIZE** YOU'VE BEEN **RIDING FENCE** FOR AN **HOUR** BEFORE THE **SUN** **WOKE** UP, **OUT THERE**. ON THE **RANGELAND**, A **WRANGLER** HAS **LOTS** OF **TIME** **ALONE** FOR **THINKING**.



BUT NO TIME FOR ANYTHING BUT **DOING** WHAT THE **BOGSMAN** **SAYS** YOU TO DO.

GOLD HAD GOTTEN **USED** TO **RIDING** **FENCE** OVER THE YEARS. GOTTEN **USED** TO **FINDING** **WIRE** **DOWN**, **BUSTED**, **UNSTRING** AND **SAGGING**.



AND IT NEVER CROSSED HIS MIND THESE DAYS AS TO **WHY** THE **FENCE** WAS **BROKEN**. **FENCE** **WIRE** **ALWAYS** **BREAKS**. IT'S **ALWAYS** **DOWN** **SOMEWHERE**. SEEMS LIKE EVERY **MORNINGS** THE **DAY** **GETS** **LAUNCHED** WITH **MENDING** A **PIECE** OF **BARB** **WIRE** **SOMEWHERE** **AROUND** THE **RANCH**!

HABIT **TOOK** **OVER** **MENDING** THE **WIRE**...NO **CONSCIOUS** **THOUGHT**, NO **PRESENT** **EFFORT**...**WIRE'S** **DOWN**...**FIX** IT **BACK**...JUST LIKE **ALWAYS**.

SOMETIMES CHANGES IN HOT OR COLD WEATHER CAN SNAP WIRE FENCES. SOMETIMES *OTHER* THINGS SNAP FENCES. TOO.

HAD GOLD JUST LOOKED DOWN AT THE GROUND *THIS* TIME, HE'D HAVE SEEN WHY THE FENCE WAS DOWN.

THERE WERE INDIAN PONY PRINTS EVERYWHERE!



BUT HE *DIDN'T* THINK ABOUT LOOKING DOWN. HE JUST THOUGHT ABOUT *THINGS*. *OTHER* THINGS. *ANYTHINS* BUT FENCES.

SUDDENLY THERE WAS *THUNDER* CLAPPING ACROSS THE PREDAWN TEXAS SKY. *SHARP* THUNDER. DEADLY THUNDER. MAN MADE AND WOLENT.

GOOD GOD! THAT SOUNDS LIKE GUNFIRE!



ZEROING IN ON THE SOUNDS OF SUDDEN RAGING GUNFIRE IN THE DISTANCE, GOLD TURNED TO FACE WEST. THERE WAS A DAWN LIGHT ON THE HORIZON.

THE SUN DON'T RISE IN THE WEST!



SUDDEN *TERROR* RIPPED THROUGH HIS GUTS. GOLD SPURNS FOR HIS HORSE.



GOLD DIDN'T *HAVE* TO LOOK AT THE GROUND NOW. HIS *BLOOD* CLOTTED WITH ICE. HE *KNEW* WHAT BROKE THE FENCE DOWN. HE *KNEW* WHAT THE *GUNFIRE* WAS ABOUT. HE *KNEW* WHY THERE WAS DAWN FIRE IN THE WEST.



HE WAS TOO FAR AWAY FROM THE RANCH. EIGHT MILES WAS TOO FAR. HE MIGHT BE TOO LATE. IT MIGHT *ALREADY* BE TOO LATE.

APACHE WARRIORS WORK QUICKLY!



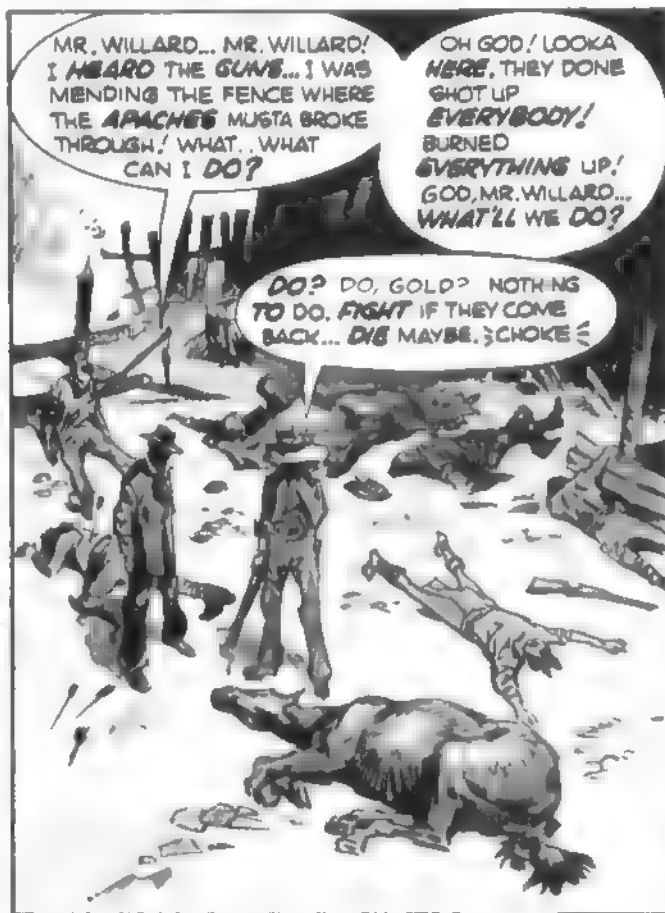
RUFÉ GOLD LOOKED UPON HIS WORLD AND FOUND IT **RAVAGED** AND **CHARRED**, **BOILED** AND **BLOODED**. HE COULD NOT THINK A CLEAR THOUGHT. **DREAD** MUDDLED HIS MIND INTO MERCIFUL **NUMBNESS**.

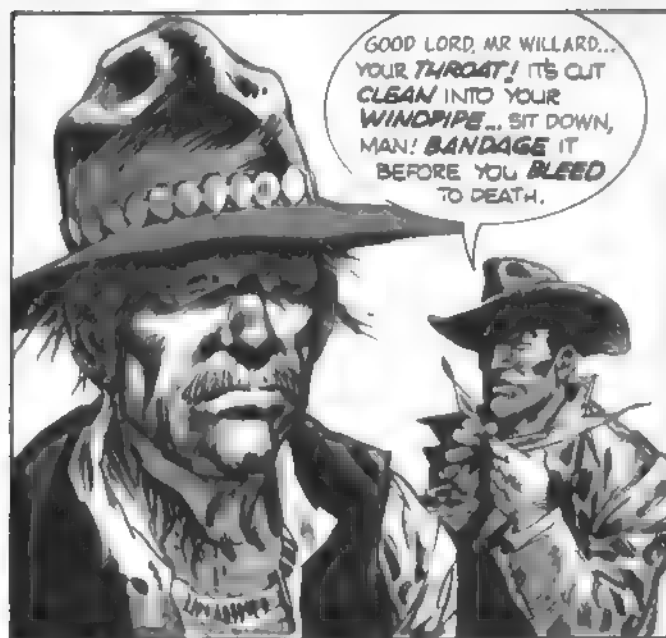


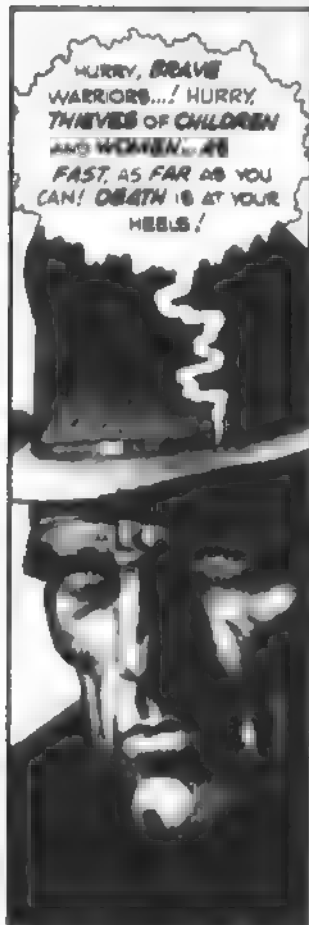
MR. WILLARD... MR. WILLARD!
I **HEARD** THE **GUNS**... I WAS
MENDING THE FENCE WHERE
THE **APACHES** MUSTA BROKE
THROUGH! WHAT... WHAT
CAN I DO?

OH GOD! LOOKA
HERE, THEY DONE
SHOT UP
EVERYBODY!
BURNED
EVERYTHING UP!
GOD, MR. WILLARD...
WHAT'LL WE DO?

DO? DO, GOLD? NOTHING
TO DO. **FIGHT** IF THEY COME
BACK... **DIE** MAYBE. } CHOKE







UNTIL HE BECAME
NO DIFFERENT AS
HUNTER, THAN
THE HUNTED.

THE INDIANS KNEW OF HIS LEGEND.
THEY KNEW OF THE GREAT BLACK
SHADOW THAT FELL UPON SLEEPING
WARRIORS AND SLEW THEM
WITHOUT MERCY.



AND NOW THE TRAVELING WARRIORS DID NOT
SLEEP FOR FEAR OF THE CREEPING BLACK
SHADOW OF DEATH. BUT THEY WERE NOT
READY TO BE ATTACKED FROM ALL SIDES.



...AS IF BY A REGIMENT OF
PONY SOLDIERS...

GOLD POSSESSED MANY,
MANY GUNS AND RIFLES.
HE'D TAKEN THEM FROM THE
WARRIORS HE'D LEFT DEAD.
HIS ATTACK PLAN WAS
MATERIALIZING...EVEN NOW,
AND THE WARRIORS WERE
SET UPON...INDEED... BY A
REGIMENT OF SOLDIERS.
SURELY NOT BY ONLY ONE
MAN!



NOR WERE THEY PREPARED TO BE
ATTACKED BY ONE MAN...LIKE GOLD!



GOLD HAD TAKEN ALL HIS GUNS AND POSITIONED THEM IN A GIANT ARMS AROUND THE WARPARTY CAMPSITE.



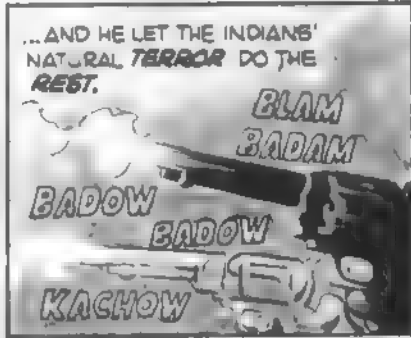
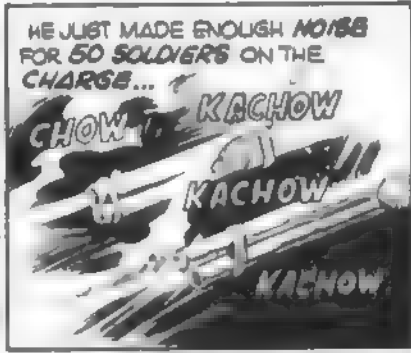
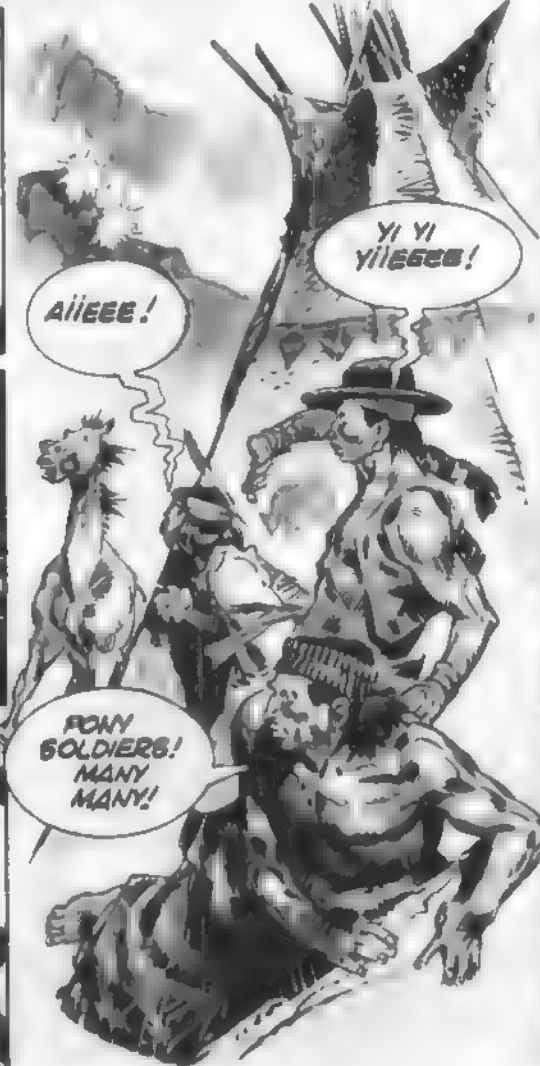
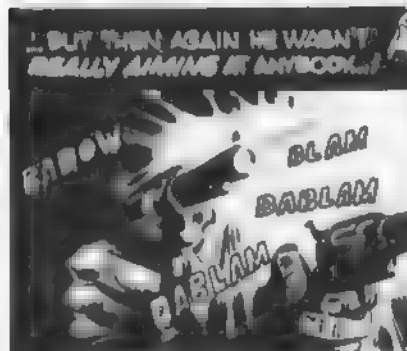
HE SET UP SERIES OF TWO, THREE AND FOUR GUNS. HE EVEN HAD A CAVALRY BLADE.

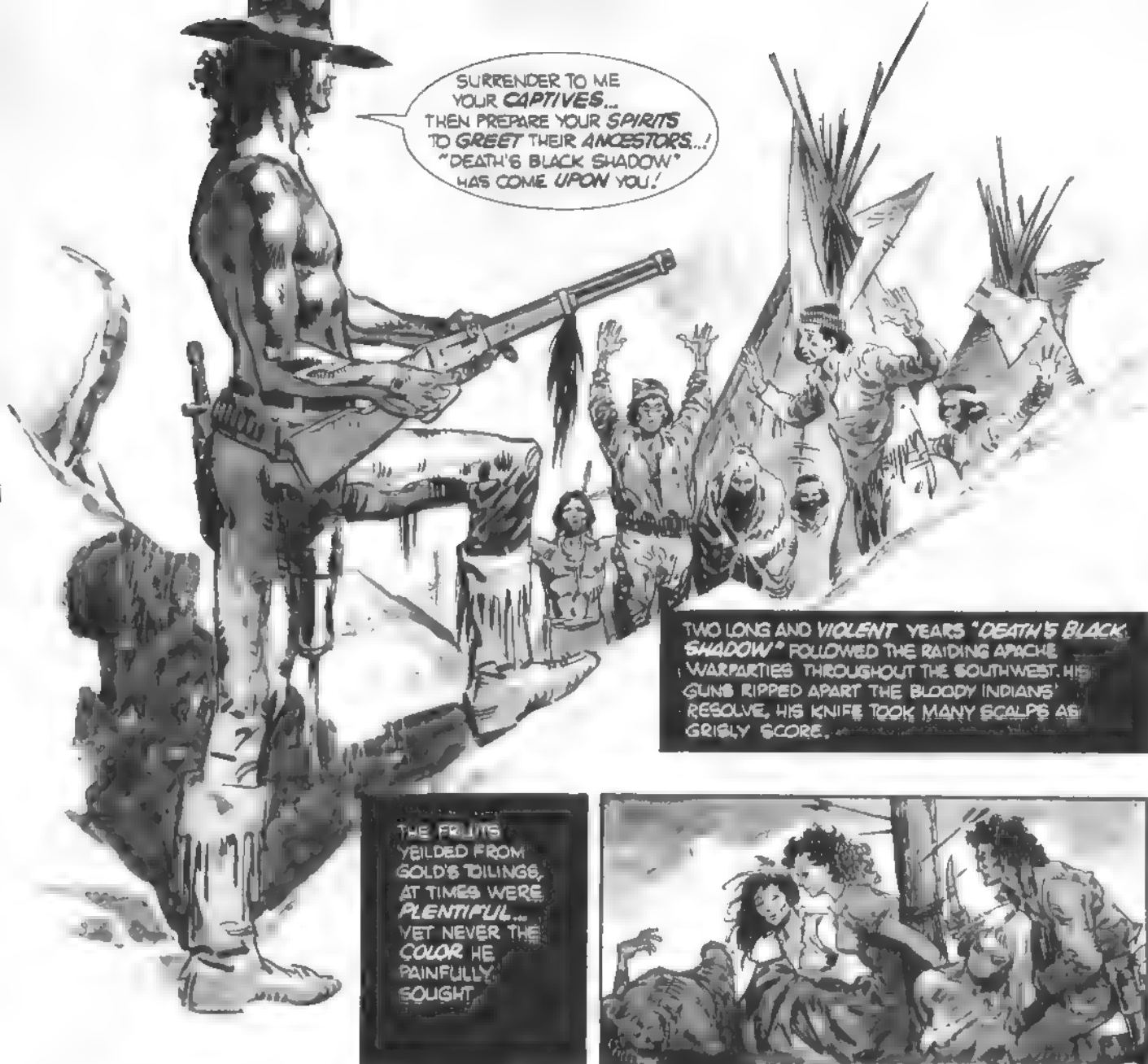


SO ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS CROUCH LOW AND START RUNNING IN A WIDE CIRCLE.



...AND PAUSE A SPLIT SECOND AT EACH PLACE WHERE HIS GUNS WERE SET UP TO FIRE THEM.





TWO LONG AND VIOLENT YEARS "DEATH'S BLACK SHADOW" FOLLOWED THE RAIDING APACHE WARPARTIES THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHWEST. HIS GUNS RIPPED APART THE BLOODY INDIANS' RESOLVE, HIS KNIFE TOOK MANY SCALPS AS GRISLY SCORE.

THE FRUITS YEILDED FROM GOLD'S DILINGS, AT TIMES WERE PLENTIFUL... YET NEVER THE COLOR HE PAINFULLY SOUGHT



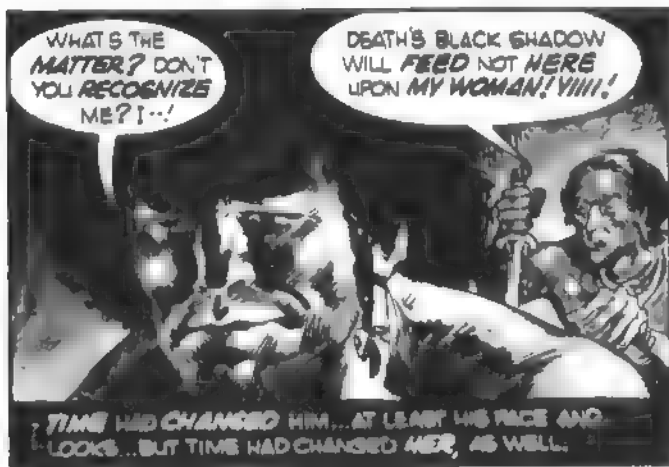
IN THOSE TWO TERROR RIDDEN YEARS, RUFÉ GOLD, CALLED BY THOSE HE TORMENTED, "DEATH'S BLACK SHADOW" FOUND AND BROUGHT BACK TO CIVILIZATION OVER TWENTY KIDNAPPED HOSTAGES. YET THE SEARCH EVER CONTINUED.

IT WAS SPRING ON THE TEXICAN FRONTIER AND THERE CAME WITH IT NO PEACE FOR GOLD. DAILY HIS SPIRIT DRIED LIKE CORN HUSKS IN SUMMER'S SUN. HIS SEARCH WAS FUTILE...

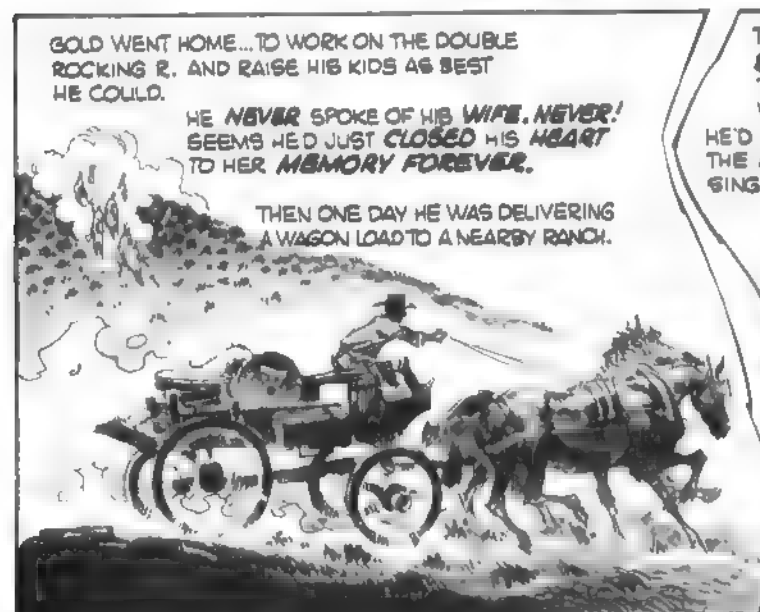
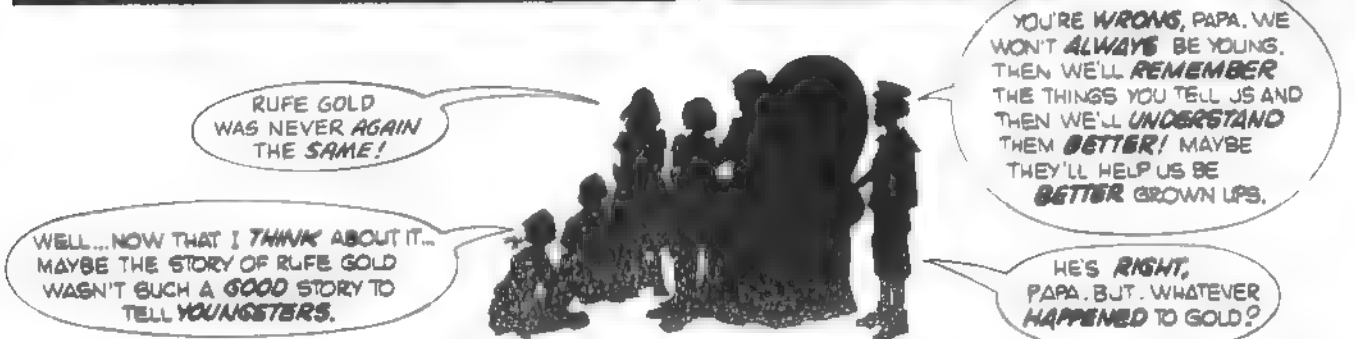


THEN, AS SUDDENLY AS THE WIND HAD SWEEPED THEM FROM HIS ARMS, THE APRIL WINDS OF FATE BLEW HIS FAMILY TO HIM ONCE MORE. YET AS TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCE CHANGES THE FACE OF DESTINY, SO DOES IT ALTER THE HEARTS OF THOSE CAUGHT UP IN IT.





SHE TOOK HER OWN LIFE BEFORE HE COULD TELL HER WHO HE WAS. THE CHILDREN WERE SAVED. THEY WERE TOO LITTLE TO UNDERSTAND THE TERROR OF THE HAPPENSTANCE. RUFE GOLD TOOK THEM HOME, HE BURIED BECKY NEXT TO HER INDIAN HUSBAND, GREY BEAR.



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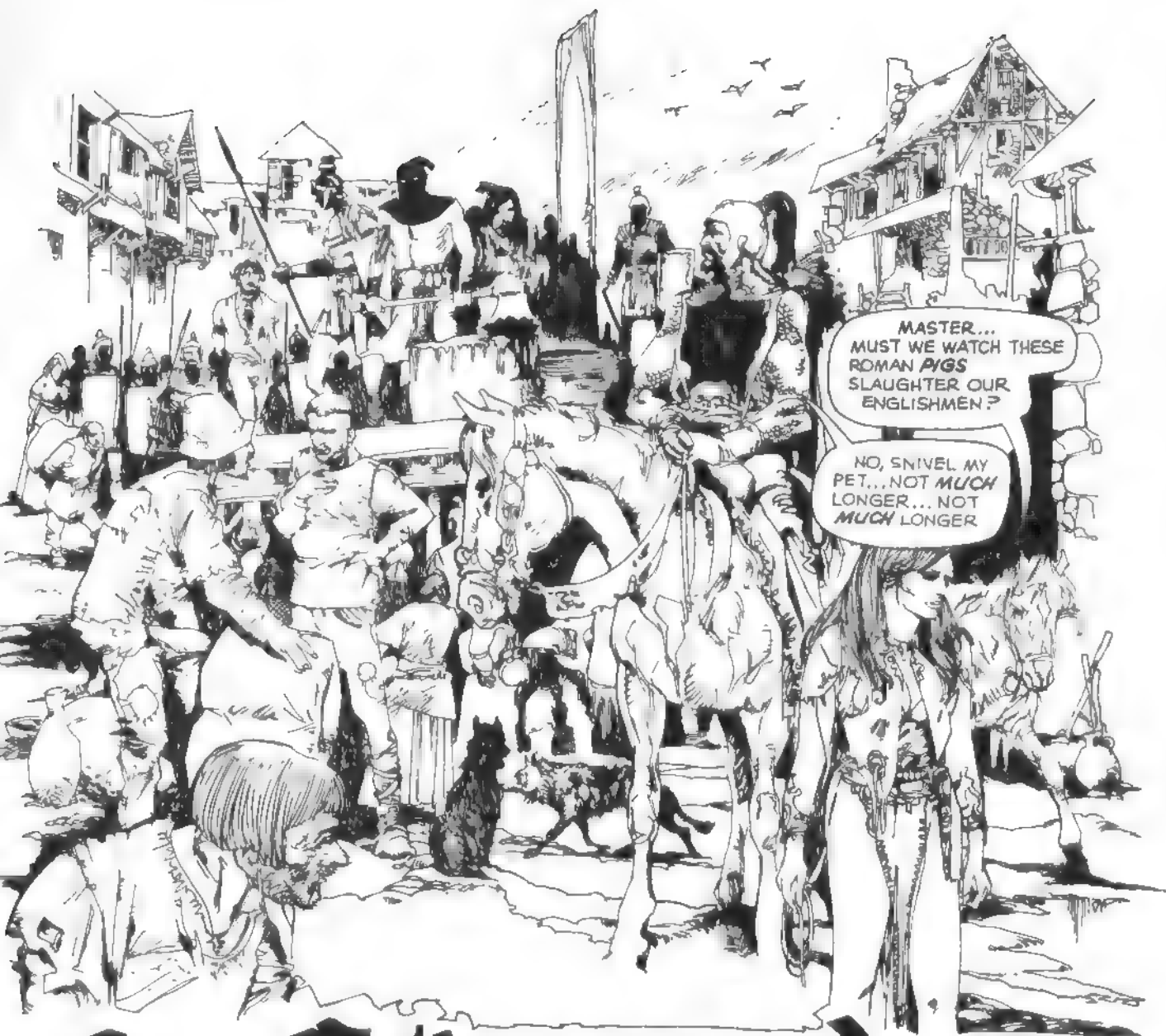
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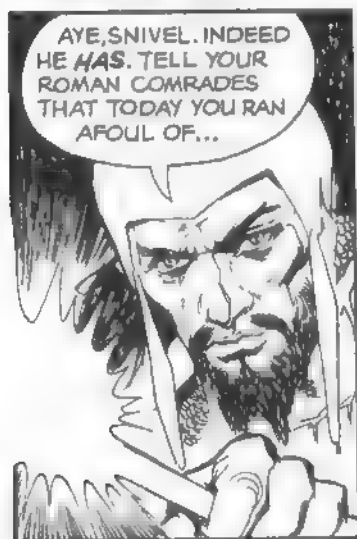
I AM AMBROSIOUS MERLINUS. THEY CALL ME **MERLIN**. THESE ARE **PERILOUS** DAYS. ALL OF BRITAIN IS UNDER THE RULE OF THE CONSULS AND LEGIONS OF **ROME**. IT IS A **UNITED** ENGLONDE IT IS A **DIVIDED** ENGLONDE. ONE DAY IT **SHALL** BE UNIFIED AS THE MIGHTY **BRITISH EMPIRE**. BUT NOT **THIS** DAY. THAT RIGHT MAY **ONLY** BE BOUGHT IN BLOOD. WE HAVE AT OUR SEACOAST FLANK THE SCAVENGING WOLVES FROM THE NORTHERN FJORDS OF NORWAY, THE **VIKINGS**. TO OUR OTHER FLANK THERE COME THE HOWLING **SAXONS**, INVADING, MURDERING, CONQUERING. FROM WITHIN IS THE INTERNAL ROT OF OUR MASTERS, THE **ROMAN SCUM**. AND ALL ABOUT THERE IS UNREST, VILLAINY, INSURRECTION AND DISORDER OF AN **OCCUPIED** ENGLONDE. A PEOPLE WHO **MUST** BE FREE. A PEOPLE WHO **CLAMOR** FOR LIGHT AND LEADERSHIP. A PEOPLE WHO ONE DAY **WILL** COME **TOGETHER** BENEATH THE HONOR AND WISDOM OF THE ONE WHO HOLDS THE KEY TO POWER... THE **SWORD!** WHICH EVEN NOW I GO TO FIND. ONCE THE SWORD IS FOUND AND TEMPERED IN THE FIRES OF KNOWLEDGE, IT WILL BE THRUST INTO A **STONE**. AND THERE WILL IT **KEEP** UNTIL AN EMBRYONIC ENGLONDE IS READY TO BE **BORN**. I AM THE KEEPER OF THE SWORD. THE **KINGMAKER**. I AM AMBROSIOUS MERLINUS. THEY CALL ME

Merlin.



The Kingmaker







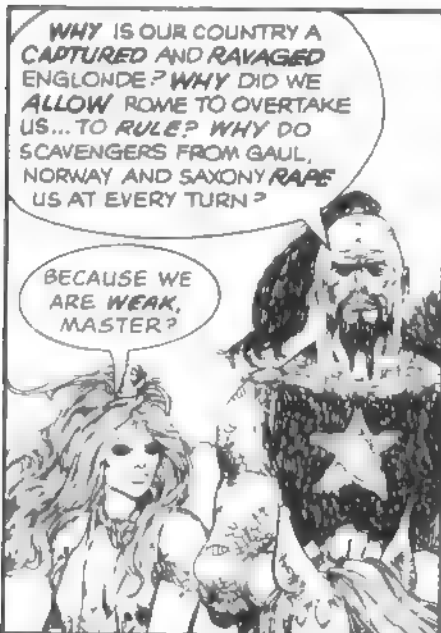
MASTER?

YES,
MY PET?

DO YOU THINK
IT WISE?

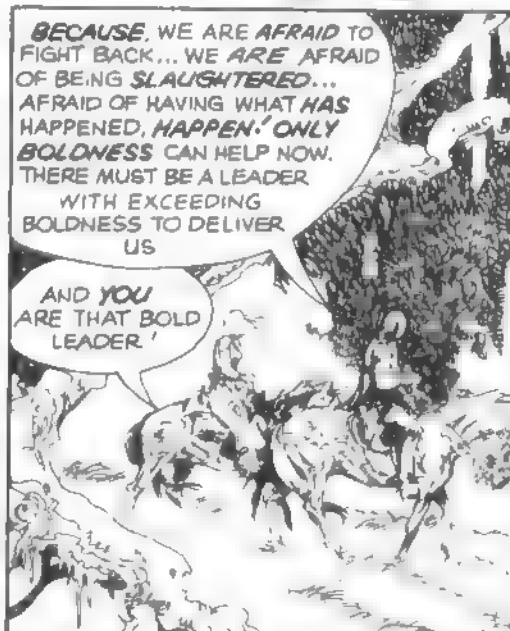
WHAT?

BEING SO
BOLD AS TO LEAVE
YOUR NAME WITH
THE BUTCHERED
ROMAN?



WHY IS OUR COUNTRY A
CAPTURED AND RAVAGED
ENGLONDE? WHY DID WE
ALLOW ROME TO OVERTAKE
US... TO RULE? WHY DO
SCAVENGERS FROM GAUL,
NORWAY AND SAXONY RAPE
US AT EVERY TURN?

BECAUSE WE
ARE WEAK,
MASTER?



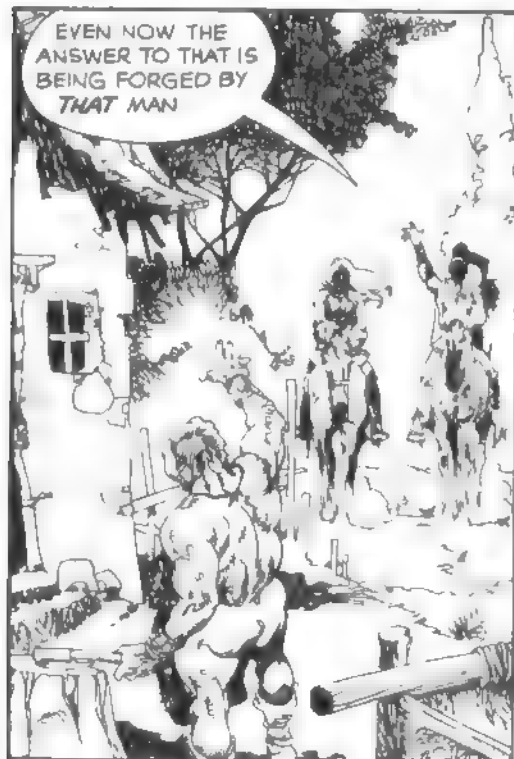
BECAUSE, WE ARE AFRAID TO
FIGHT BACK... WE ARE AFRAID
OF BEING SLAUGHTERED...
AFRAID OF HAVING WHAT HAS
HAPPENED, HAPPEN. ONLY
BOLDNESS CAN HELP NOW.
THERE MUST BE A LEADER
WITH EXCEEDING
BOLDNESS TO DELIVER
US

AND YOU
ARE THAT BOLD
LEADER!



NO!
NOT I!

WHO THEN?



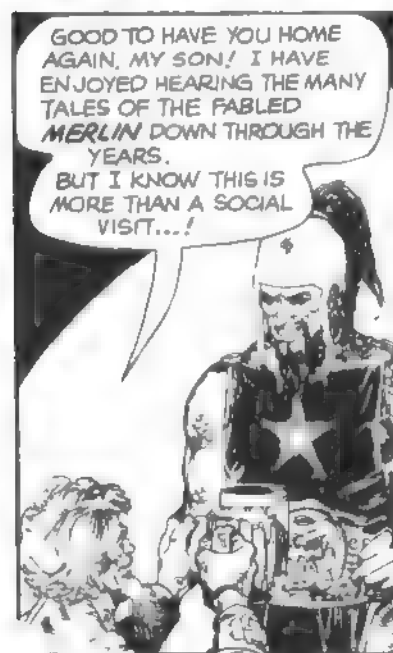
EVEN NOW THE
ANSWER TO THAT IS
BEING FORGED BY
THAT MAN



MERLIN! MERLIN,
MY SWEET BOY! IT'S SO
GOOD TO LOOK UPON YOU
ONCE MORE! YOU GROW
MORE HANDSOME WITH
AGE AS I GROW MORE
TOADLY!

NEVER WAS THERE A MORE
KINGLY TOAD! NOR A MORE
MAGICAL ONE! BELASIOUS, GIVE
GREETING TO MY FAMILIAR,
SNIVEL

BELASIOUS
WAS MY TEACHER!
HE TAUGHT ALL THINGS HIS EYES
LOOKED INTO THE SECRET
DARKNESS AND SHOWED MINE
HOW TO SEE BELASIOUS THE
MIGHTIEST MAGICIAN OF THE
EARTH. WELL MET!



AND THE
STONE?

IT IS **HERE. THE
LEARNING STONE.**
WHEREIN LIES

STORED THE KNOWLEDGE OF
THE **INFINITE**, TEN TIMES TEN
HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS
OLD. THE STONE INTO WHICH A
MILLENIUM OF THE EARTH'S
WISEST KINGS, LORDS, AND
WIZARDS HAVE CAST THEIR
KNOWLEDGE...

... **HERE TO KEEP**, HERE
AMASSED TO ONE DAY ALTER
THE FALTERING DESTINY OF AN
IGNORANT **WORLD**. NOW,
MERLIN, TAKE THE **GOLDEN
KEY**... CAST IT INTO THE
STONE... LET THE TRANSFER
OF WISDOM DRAIN INTO IT...
AND LET **NO MAN** PULL IT...

.. NO MAN AT LEAST
WHO IS NOT FIT TO
WIELD THE **POWER AND
KNOWLEDGE** IT
BRINGS.

HENCE THIS
HOUR, **WHOEVER
PULLETH THE
SWORD FROM THE
STONE SHALL BE
KING OF ALL
ENGLONDE!** GOD
BLESS
ENGLONDE!

SSHHAANGGG

NEVER HAS THERE
BEEN SUCH A THING
IN **HEAVEN AND
EARTH!** NEVER
HAS THE **NEED** FOR
IT BEEN SO **DIRE!**
NEVER AGAIN WILL
I COME SO CLOSE
TO **GOD...** THAN IN
THIS HOUR.
**BEHOLD, THE
SWORD IN THE
STONE!**



MASTER...
WHAT'S THAT
KNOCKING?

ROMANS! THEY'VE
FOLLOWED US,
SNIVEL!

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP



SHH QUIET NOW I
MAY BE ABLE TO
CONVINCE THEM I AM
A WRETCHED SMITH
A - - - - - I CAN BE
READY, THE CRAFT



YES, YOUNG
LORD? DO YOU
REQUIRE A
BLACKSMITH?

NO,
MASTER. I
REQUIRE A
MAGICIAN.



IN FACT THE ONE
STANDING *BEHIND*
YOU THERE, *HE!*
MERLIN.

THIS IS NO ROMAN,
BELASIOUS. MOVE
ASIDE TO LET ME
CONVERSE WITH
HIM!



HOW DO YOU KNOW
ME? AND HOW DID YOU
KNOW MY WHEREABOUTS?
SPEAK QUICKLY!

I HAVE A
NOSE FOR PATRIOTISM
I FOLLOWED
THE SCENT

SPOKEN
POLITELY.

I FOLLOWED YOU
AFTER YOU SLICED UP THE
ROMAN IN THE CITY. MY
MASTER SENT FOR THE
SERVICES OF MERLIN.



YOU HAVE
PROOF?

FRESH
ROMAN EARS,
M LORD. MY
TRUSTS LIE
WITH KING
UTHER!



UTHER! MY
FRIEND IS IN
NEED?

MY LORD KING
UTHER LAYS SIEGE
TO THE CASTLE OF
GORLOIS! UTHUR'S
FORCES BATTLE
THOSE OF HIS RIVAL, THE
DUKE OF CORNWALL.
PLEASE COME AT
ONCE! IT GOES
ILL.

I MYSELF
WILL *SEE* YOU
THERE. FOR
EVERY MAN IS
SORELY NEEDED!

HO!



THE KING
BATTLING
HIS DUKE?
I DO NOT
UNDER
STAND

BUT IF UTHUR
NEEDS ME, I MUST
GO TO HIM!

WE SHALL RETURN FOR
THE KINGMAKER, BELASIOUS.
IT IS A WONDERFUL WORK
OF ART WHOSE MEMORY
SHALL LIVE THROUGHOUT
THE AGES OF THE EARTH!

HURRY,
SNIVEL.
WE HAVE
MAGICKS
TO DO
THIS
NIGHT!



MERLIN! THE CASTLE
OF UTHUR! AND THERE
BEYOND...THE CASTLE
OF GORLOIS!



HOLD
IT THERE,
STRANGERS,
OR YOU
DIE!

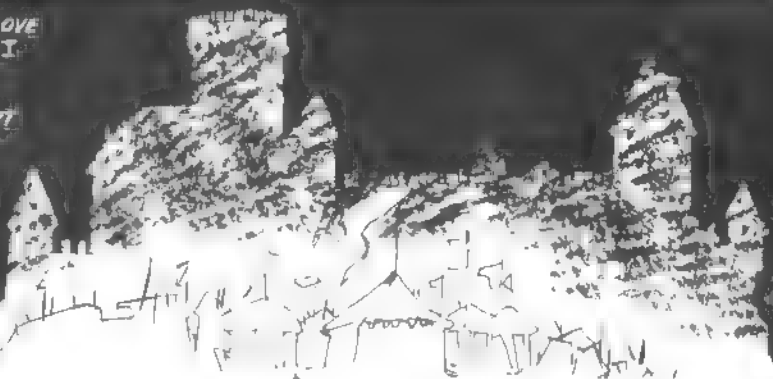
QUIET, PUP! IT IS MERLINUS!
YOU CAME! I KNEW YOU WOULD,
YOU OLD RASCAL! CAN'T RESIST
A GOOD SCRAP! COME IN AND
HEAR THE WOES OF POOR
UTHUR!



YOUR WINE IS
SOOTHING AND YOUR
FURNITURE RESTFUL.
BUT I WOULD SOONER
KNOW YOUR TROUBLE
HERE, MY KING!

IT IS ALL MY
FAULT, I FEAR I
MADE THE MISTAKE
OF CAUSING
SCANDAL IN MY
COURTS. I
STUMBLERD,
STUPIDLY, ACROSS MY
OWN HEART.

"IT WAS FOLLOWING MY EASTER
CORONATION FEAST, THAT I FELL IN LOVE
WITH YGRAINE, WIFE OF GORLOIS. I
FOOLISHLY LAVISHED HER WITH
ATTENTION. GORLOIS, IN RAGE,
WITHDREW FROM MY COURT WITHOUT
LEAVE, BACK TO CORNWALL."



"IT IS AS I'VE FORESEEN,
UTHER! YOUR OWN RAGE AT
BEING SLIGHTED BY GORLOIS
RAISED YOUR ARMY AND BROUGHT
THEM TO BE BUTCHERED AT
THE DUKE'S CASTLE."



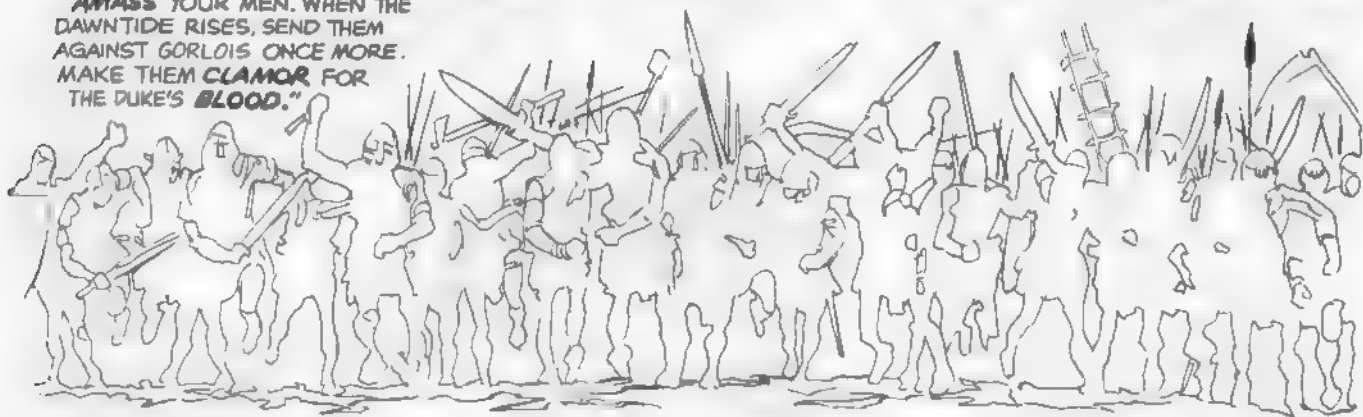
"YOU WILL KEEP GORLOIS
TRAPPED INSIDE THE WALLS
OF HIS CASTLE WITH THE BLOOD OF
YOUR OWN BRAVE MEN. BUT THE
WOMAN, YGRAINE, IS NOT
THEREIN."



"NO! GORLOIS HAS TRICKED
YOU. HE HAS KEPT THE BEAUTIFUL
YGRAINE SECRETED AWAY IN YOUR OWN
CASTLE. YOU WASTE YOURSELF
HERE, IF YOU EVER HOPE TO
HAVE HER FOR YOUR OWN."



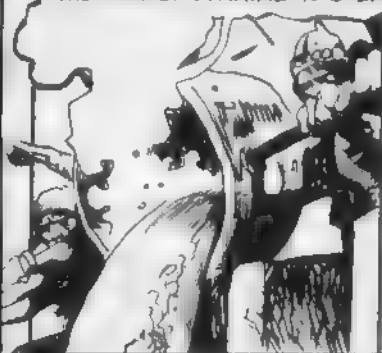
"AMASS YOUR MEN. WHEN THE
DAWNTIDE RISES, SEND THEM
AGAINST GORLOIS ONCE MORE.
MAKE THEM CLAMOR FOR
THE DUKE'S BLOOD."



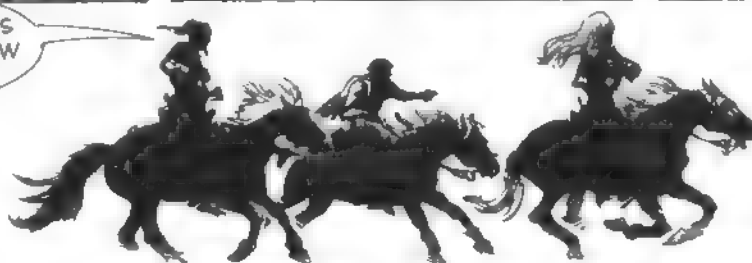
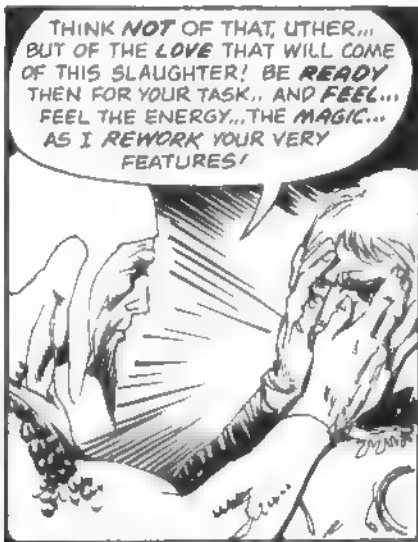
"WATCH THEM AS THEY STREAM
TOWARD DEATH AND DESTRUCTION!"

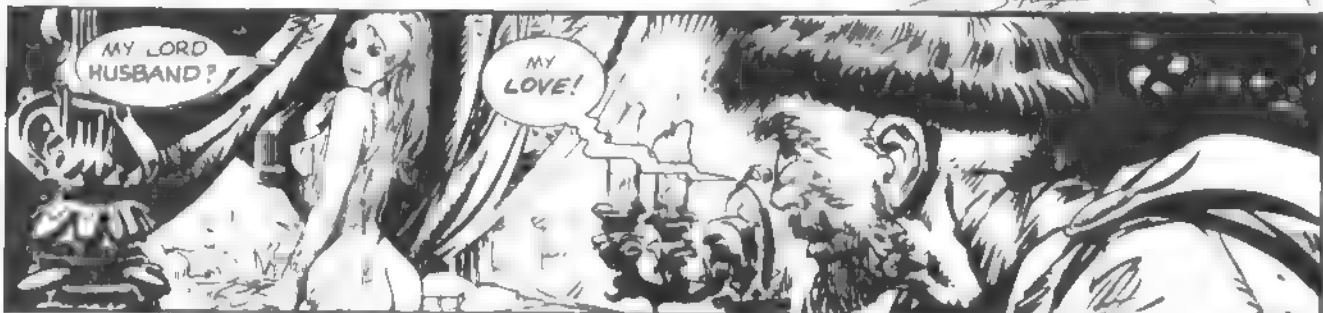
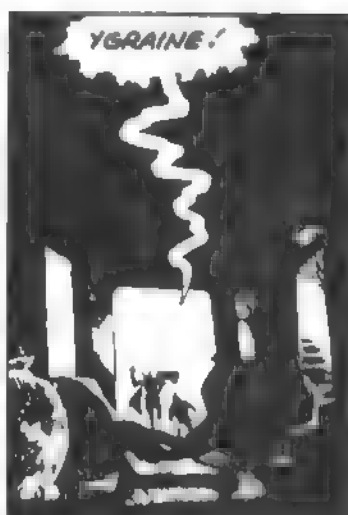


"WATCH THEM **BREAK** UPON THE
GRANITE WALLS LIKE WAVES OF THE
SEA! WATCH THEIR GLORY SWIRL
AND RISE LIKE **DEATH'S BLOODY**
FOUNTAIN! THEN LET THE DIN OF
BATTLE CHIME... WHILE WE GO
UNTO YOUR OWN CASTLE, UTHUR...
THE COMELY YGRAINE TO STEAL!"



"GIVE THEM THE
SIGNAL TO ATTACK!"







NO, CORMARAN, OLD FRIEND, COME LET MERLIN TASTE GIANT MEAT!

NAAHHHHH!!!



NAH! NOW SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE, YOU BABY EATER! BROKEN MY SWORD!



WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM?

WHAT CAN WE DO WITH A WIZARD?

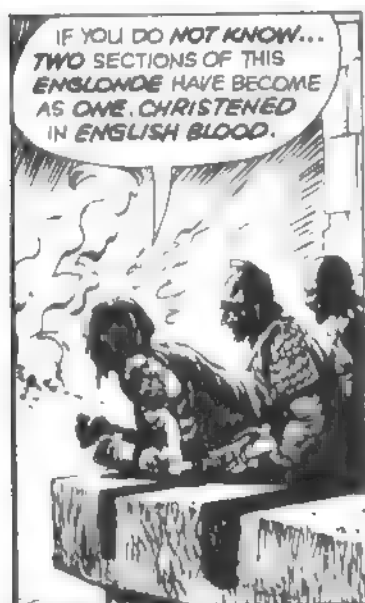
WHOOOAHWHOOOAHWHOOO



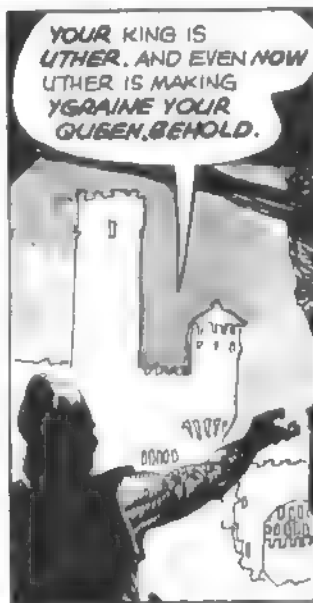
WE CAN PUT DOWN OUR WEAPONS AT LAST TOGETHER. THE BATTLE IS DONE. DIMILIOC IS STORMED. THE HORN CALLS TO UTHUR. GORLOIS IS DEAD.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

WHOOO AH HAHWHOOOAHWHOOO



IF YOU DO NOT KNOW... TWO SECTIONS OF THIS ENGLONDE HAVE BECOME AS ONE, CHRISTENED IN ENGLISH BLOOD.



YOUR KING IS UTHUR. AND EVEN NOW UTHUR IS MAKING YGRAINE YOUR QUEEN, BEHOLD.



"SHE HAS SEEN THROUGH HIS DISGUISE AND ACCEPTED HIM... AND THE CROWN OF LOVE HE BRINGS."



OUR HORSES, SNIVEL, MY PET. THE KING AND QUEEN HAVE NEEDS NOT FOR US LONGER.

BACK TO THE CRYSTAL CAVE! WE HAVE SOMETHING THERE TO PICK UP.



A BATTLE IS WON THIS NIGHT, BUT THE WAR STILL LIES AHEAD. YET TONIGHT A KING TO WIN THAT WAR WAS MADE.

WELL... OUT OF KING UTHUR AND OUT OF YGRAINE...

KING UTHUR?



...FOR A CHILD IN THIS VICTORIOUS UNION TONIGHT WAS CONCEIVED. AND IN NINE MONTHS I'LL SUGGEST A NAME TO ITS FATHER, KING UTHUR.

WHAT NAME WILL YOU SUGGEST?

OH... I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FOND OF... ARTHUR! YES... ARTHUR! ARTHUR! BY JOVE! SMASHING!

ORDER EERIE

HAVE YOU READ GRAY MORROW'S "WARDROBE OF MONSTERS?" JEFF JONES' "TO SLAY A DRAGON?" ALEX TOTI'S "THE STALKERS?" WHAT ABOUT ANGELO TORRES' "HOWLING SUCCESS?" GENE COLON DID A FINE JOB ON "TO PAY THE PIPER!" ESTEBAN MAROTO'S ENTIRE "DAX" SERIES WAS SPECTACULAR! AND JOSE ORTIZ' "JACKASS" SERIES WAS GRAPHIC MADNESS! AS WAS AURALEON'S "JUST PASSING THROUGH!" PAUL NEARY'S "DERELICT" WAS A FINE SCI-FI CLASSIC. NEAL ADAMS' "VOODOO DRUMS" WAS OUT OF THIS WORLD! AL WILLIAMSON'S "THE LIGHTHOUSE" WAS A REAL TERROR TALE, AS WAS "CURSE OF THE VAMPIRE" BY MARTIN SALVADOR AND JOSE BEA'S "HEAD SHOP." ISIDRO MONES' "THE EVIL THAT MEN DO" WAS SPECTACULAR AND THE RICH CORBEN, THREE TALE COLOR MASTERPIECE, THE "CHILD" SERIES, IS A COLLECTOR'S DREAM. BERNI WRIGHTSON'S "THE PEPPER LAKE MONSTER" WAS AN EC-TRADITION CLASSIC. "THE MANHUNTER" BY WALLY WOOD WAS ANOTHER CLASSIC!



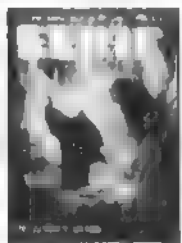
EERIE 1970 YEARBK
#18YB70 \$4 00



EERIE 1971 YEARBK
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EERIE 1972 YEARBK.
#18YB72 \$2 50



EERIE #2
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EERIE #3
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EERIE #4
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EERIE #5
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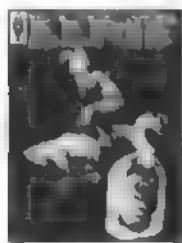
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#1813 \$3 00



EERIE #14
#1814 \$3 00



EERIE #15
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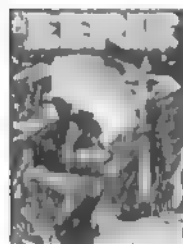
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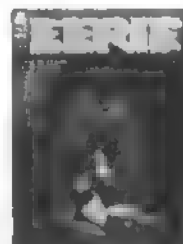
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EERIE #20
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EERIE #28
#1828 \$2 00



EERIE #29
#1829 \$2 00



EERIE #30
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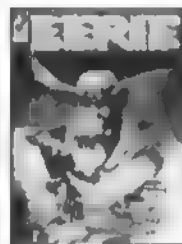
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EERIE #32
#1832 \$2 00



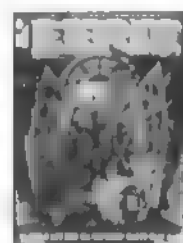
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#1833 \$2 00



EERIE #34
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EERIE #42
#1842 \$2 25



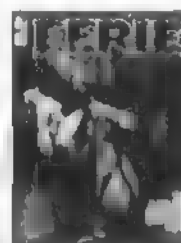
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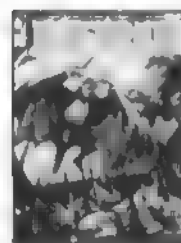
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EERIE #45
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EERIE #46
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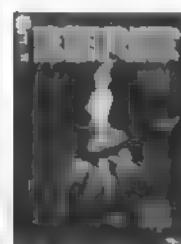
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EERIE #58
#1858 \$1 50



EERIE #59
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EERIE #60
#1860 \$1 50



EERIE #61
#1861 \$1 50



EERIE #62
#1862 \$1 50

BACK ISSUES!

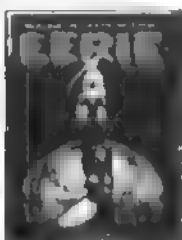
MANY EERIE ISSUES WOULD BE WORTH HAVING FOR THE COVER ALONE! CHECK THE COVERS BELOW AND YOU WILL FIND MANY FRANK FRAZETTA MASTERPIECES. THE EGYPTIAN QUEEN ON THE COVER OF EERIE #23 IS ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE (AND DESIRABLE) WOMEN FRAZETTA HAS PAINTED. THERE IS THE JEFF JONES/VAUGHN BODE CASTLE IN THE CLOUDS COLLABORATION OF EERIE #27. THE RICH CORBEN BEAUTY AND BEAST OF #32. AND THE KEN KELLY EERIE #38 COVER IS NOTHING SHORT OF SPECTACULAR. AND THERE ARE MORE FRAZETTA, MORE BODE, MORE KELLY COVERS PLUS MANY GREATS BY OTHER FINE ARTISTS. CHECK THEM OUT. MANY EERIE MAGAZINES WOULD BE WORTH OWNING SIMPLY FOR A SINGLE TALE THAT APPEARS IN THAT ISSUE! "FOOTSTEPS OF FRANKENSTEIN" BY REED CRANDALL WAS A TERRIFYING TALE. "IT THAT LURKS," A DAN ADKINS MASTERPIECE. "DARK RIDER" BY JOHN SEVERIN WAS AN EXCELLENT WESTERN TALE. AND THERE ARE MANY, MANY MORE.



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#1806 \$3 50



EERIE #7
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EERIE #8
#1808 \$3 50



EERIE #9
#1809 \$3 50



EERIE #10
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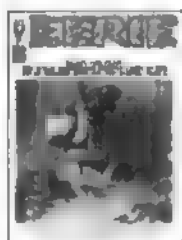
EERIE #11
#1811 \$3 00



EERIE #12
#1812 \$3 00



EERIE #21
#1821 \$2 50



EERIE #22
#1822 \$2 50



EERIE #23
#1823 \$2 50



EERIE #24
#1824 \$2 50



EERIE #25
#1825 \$2 50



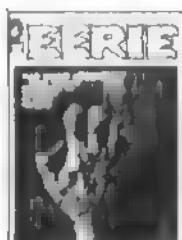
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EERIE #27
#1827 \$2 00



EERIE #35
#1835 \$2 00



EERIE #36
#1836 \$2 00



EERIE #37
#1837 \$2 00



EERIE #38
#1838 \$2 00



EERIE #39
#1839 \$2 00



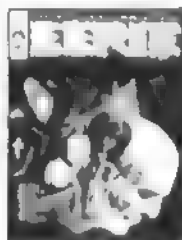
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EERIE #41
#1841 \$2 00



EERIE #49
#1849 \$1 50



EERIE #50
#1850 \$1 50



EERIE #51
#1851 \$1 50



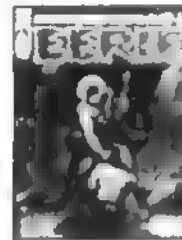
EERIE #52
#1852 \$1 50



EERIE #53
#1853 \$1 50



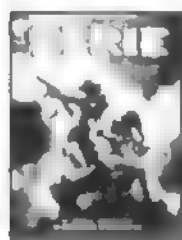
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EERIE #63
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EERIE #64
#1864 \$1 50



EERIE #65
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EERIE #66
#1866 \$1 50

EERIE #1 is gone! This fantastic collector's item has disappeared entirely. Soon you will be forced to pay dealers' exorbitant prices to obtain rare EERIE back issues . . . when you can get them at all. You have a great collection already. Sure. But have you checked it over lately? Do you have all the fantastic Frazetta covers? The great Jose Ortiz stories? The whole Child saga? Do you have them all? Remember how your mother thought EERIE #7 was the perfect thickness to level the hole in the basement . . . under the washer? You're a collector. You deserve an entire set of mint condition magazines. Order them now!

To order any of these items, please see last page of this magazine for convenient RUSH ORDER FORM.

A GALAXY OF STAR TREK NOVELS!

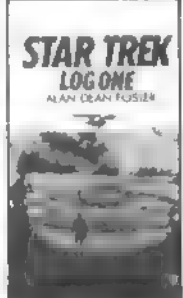
Star Trek lives! First as a live-action science fiction adventure series, then as an exciting Saturday morning animated television show. Now it comes to you in this terrific collection of paperback books, adapted by major science fiction writer James Bligh. Included also in this collection are several books by the series' creators on how Star Trek was developed and produced for television, including information on some of its best episodes. Each book is a thick 4-inch by 7-inch masterpiece with a full-color cover and a personal note or preface by the author. Some even have a section of photos showing actual scenes from the television series that you can now read about. Also included are photos of Captain Kirk and his crew, Gene Roddenberry, the producer, the Starship, its control panel and instruments used on the show! There's even a whole book adapted from the cartoon show. No true Science Fiction collector is worth his weight in salt until he has all Star Trek classics in his possession. Stay tuned to this ad for more exciting adaptations of inter-galactic adventures! Order now!



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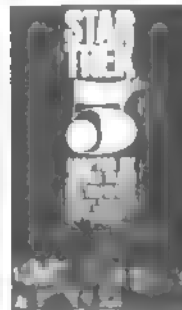
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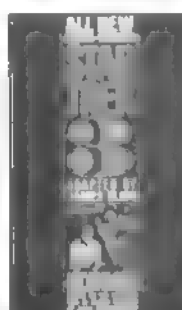
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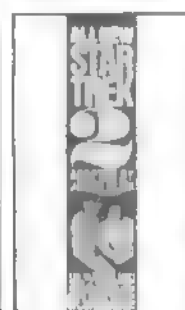
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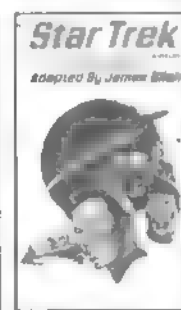
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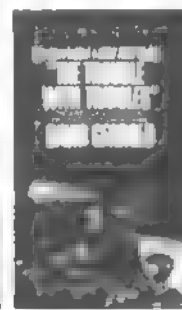
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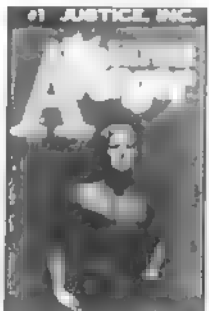


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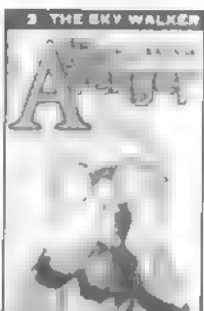
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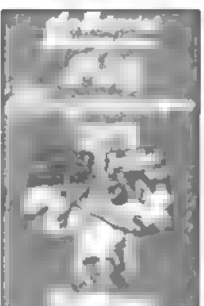


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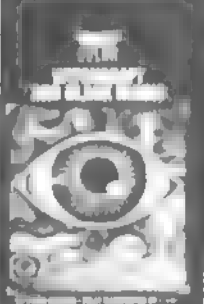
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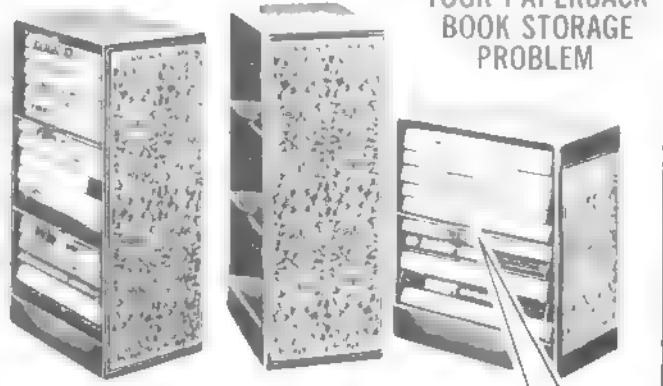
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Sinbad's beloved Princess Parisa is reduced to six inches in height! Only a piece of shell from the egg of the monstrous Colossa bird the Roc can restore her to normal. But the seas back in Colossa are fraught with danger such as evil winds, malicious sailors, and the ear-piercing Sirens. Will Sinbad's ship survive? BW \$8.95 #22007 Color \$19.95 #22031

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Sinbad and his men reach Colossa, and scale the craggy peaks to the Roc's nest. There they do battle with the great two-headed bird and Sinbad is captured by the monster. If that weren't enough, a living human skeleton is brought to life by Sokurah to menace the adventurous seamen. And there are still surprises galore! BW \$8.95 #22008 Color \$19.95 #22032

CHAPTER FOUR "Dragon's Lair"

After returning the princess to her normal size, Sokurah looses his fire-breathing dragon after Sinbad and Parisa. Just as he's about to get them, the Cyclops comes to their rescue. A battle to the death ensues, and the one-eyed creature is beaten. The dragon chases the pair to the sea where it is a fight of giants! BW \$8.95 #22009 Color \$19.95 #22033

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CHAPTER TWO "Typhon, Lord of the Deep"

The next impasse is the infamous menace of the Clash of Rocks. These are mountains in the sea that are alive! Jason must pass thru them and faces destruction. Then, as doom nears, the giant God Typhon comes to the rescue. And a surprise awaits Jason in the waters floats a beautiful young girl! BW \$8.95 #22011 Color \$19.95 #22035

CHAPTER THREE "Hydra of Hades"

After being captured by the inhabitants of Colchis land of the Golden Fleece, Jason breaks free. Then, in a diamond and gold studded cave he finds the Fleece. But guarding it is the Hydra, a seven-headed dragon. It kills one of Jason's men and then goes after the hero himself. Exciting! BW \$8.95 #22012 Color \$19.95 #22036

CHAPTER FOUR "Golden Fleece"

Jason and his men grab the Fleece and run! But their way is barred first by a flaming fireball from the sky and second by an army of killer skeleton warriors. These grew from the teeth of the dead Hydra. And the nine skeletons battle Jason and two men in an incredible finale. Two men die. BW \$8.95 #22013 Color \$19.95 #22037

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INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN



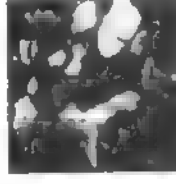
After passing through a weird mist, star Grant Williams begins to shrink. Finally, he can no longer walk amongst men and lives in his collar. There, he battles a now-giant cat, a monster tarantula, and a rain storm, in which he nearly drowns. Finally he shrinks to atomic size! What strange new worlds will he discover? #2236/\$7.99

TROG



Scientist Joan Crawford discovers the incomplete body of a prehistoric caveman and brings him back to life in her sinister laboratory. After one million years of hibernation, how will the reanimated Neanderthal react? And what unearthly secret does the scientist learn about prehistoric earth? An incredible film #2262, \$7.99

THE THING



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IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE



Ray Bradbury's classic sci-fi tale becomes an incredible motion picture. An alien crashes on earth and enslaves earth people in order to repair his ship. All goes well until one man discovers the alien and confronts the strange being. The fact of the Xenomorph is frightening! Thrills aplenty! #2233 \$7.99

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Two earth scientists are kidnapped and brought to the planet Meteluna, a world at war with another planet. The scientists are asked to help the Metelunians and find themselves in the midst of one of the most incredible battles in the history of the universe. And things get worse when the world of Meteluna starts to crack under a barrage! #2235, \$7.99

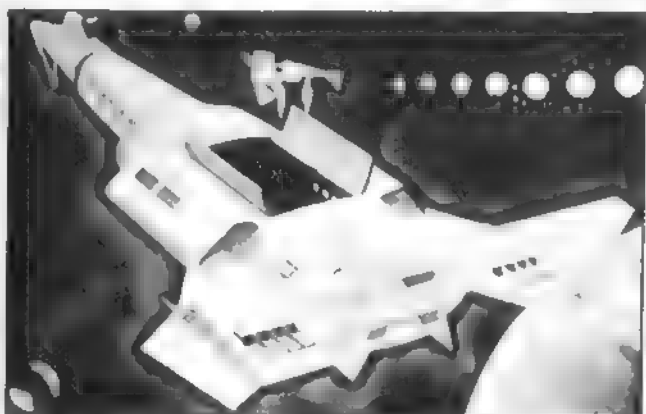
WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST



After being exposed to the rays of the world's first Plutonium bomb-blast, Col. Langan begins to grow at the rate of 10' per day. And when he reaches 100', he goes on a destructive tour of Los Angeles. Bullets only annoy him, and with his man's cunning there is no way to destroy him. Can he be stopped? Is this the end of civilization? #2232 \$7.99

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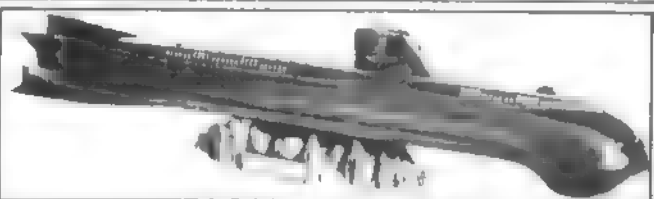
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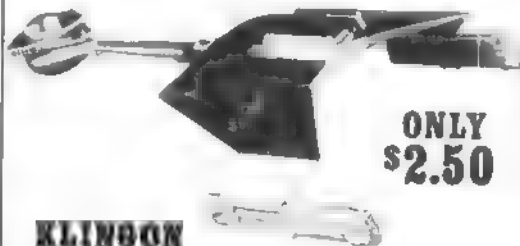
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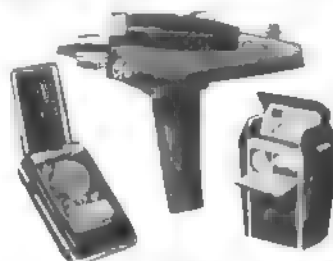
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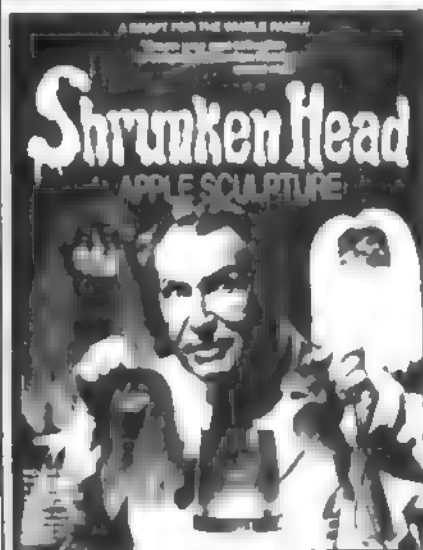


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Shrunken Head

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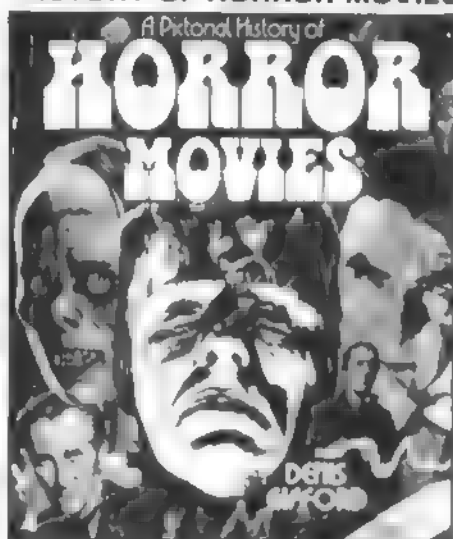
SPIRIT BAG #3 October to December 1940. THE SPIRIT joins the US espionage service but still keeps fighting such baddies as The Black Queen and Slim Pickens and his gang. But keep your eyes on the tale of enemy spies! Plus, Will Eisner talks about the birth of his classic comic strip. #2160 SPIRIT BAG #3 \$4.25

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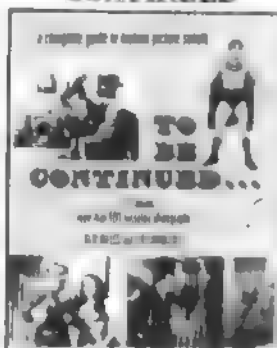
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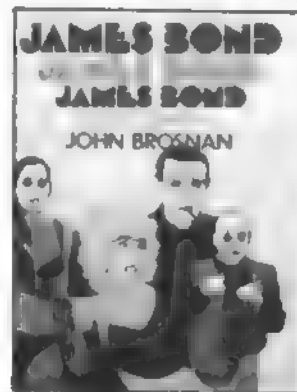


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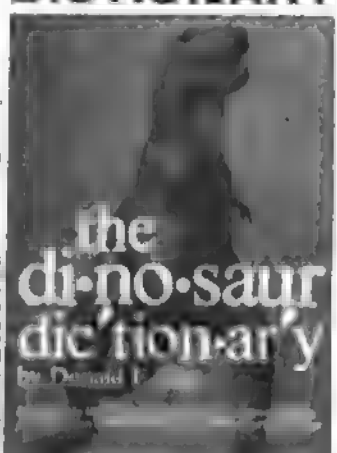
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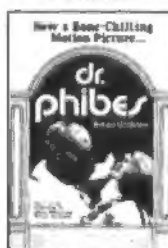
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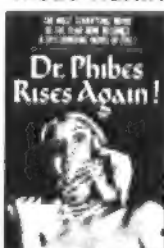
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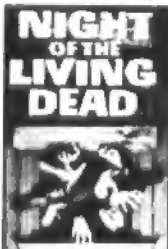
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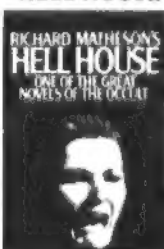
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